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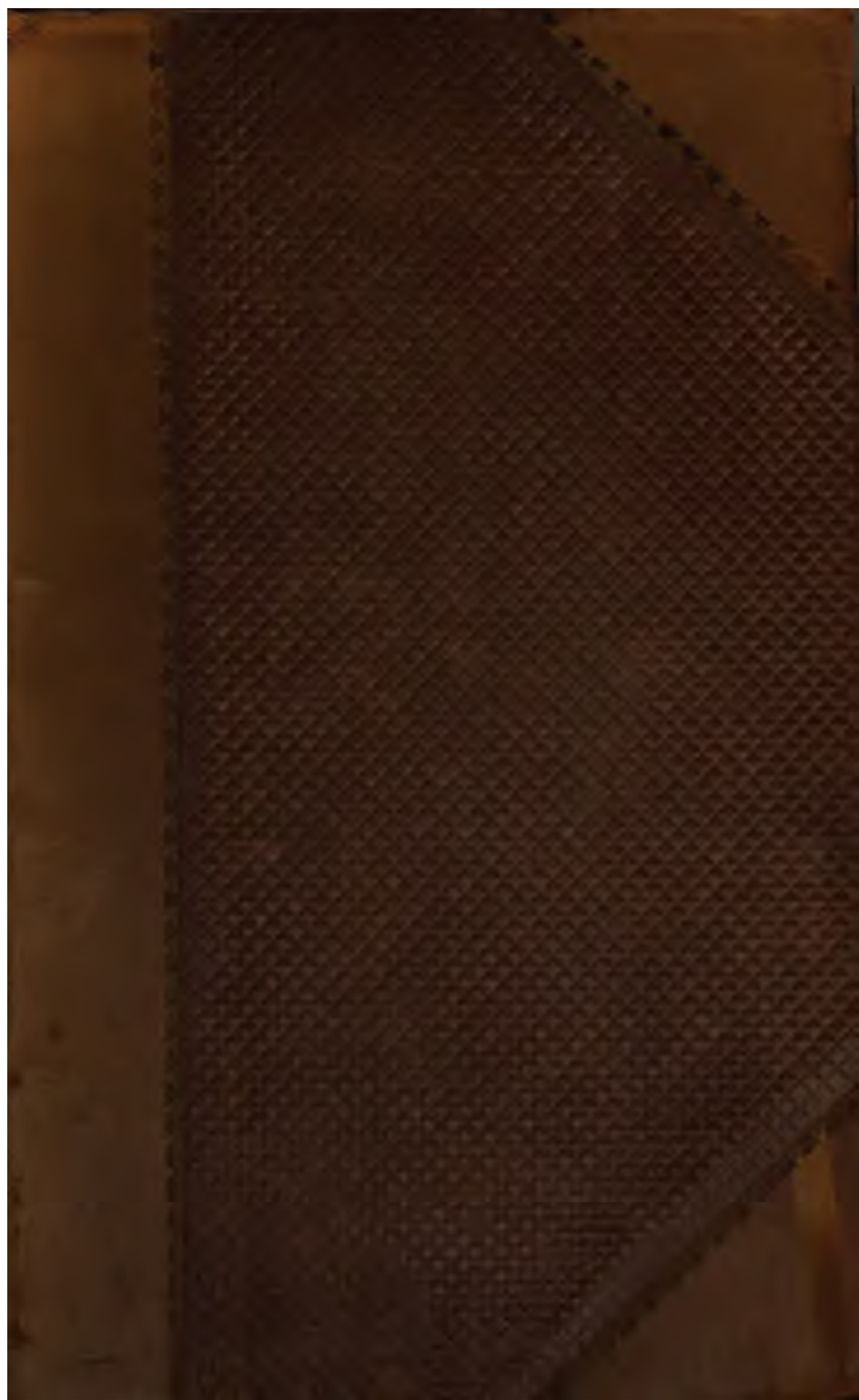
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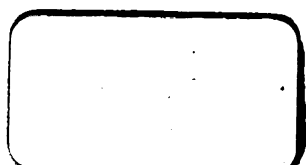
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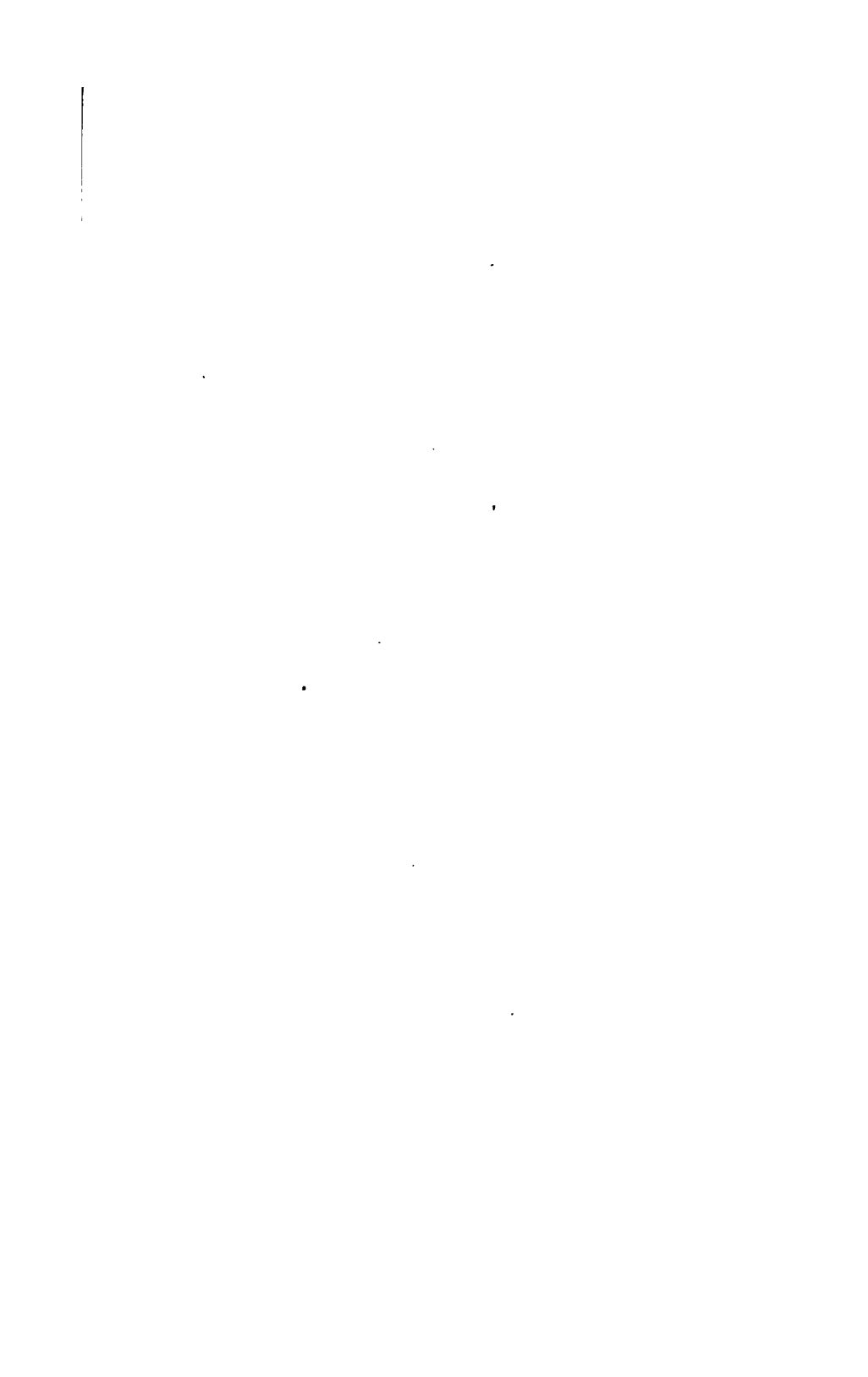
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THE  
**BASQUE PROVINCES:**

THEIR  
POLITICAL STATE, SCENERY, AND INHABITANTS;

WITH  
ADVENTURES  
AMONGST THE CARLISTS AND CHRISTINOS



BY  
EDWARD BELL STEPHENS, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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## PREFACE.

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It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the contest which is now carried on in Spain. That contest might have been, but it was not permitted to be, simply a civil war, involving interests of no greater magnitude than the success of one of the two aspirants to the Spanish throne. The intermeddling policy of what are termed the "free governments of Western Europe," has given to the struggle a new and a most consequential character. England, France and Portugal, have committed themselves to the contest,—and the first has expended blood and treasure to an enormous amount, in the hope of securing the ascendancy of one of the contending parties.

The triumph of Don Carlos would therefore be not merely the defeat of Queen Isabella; it would be the defeat of the combined powers of her allies. Whether such will be the issue of the strife, I take not on myself to assert. However, it is not only possible,—but probable;—and the probability is in fact sufficient to fix the serious attention of Europe upon a game played for so deep a stake.

This unhappy family quarrel having thus outgrown its peninsular importance and assumed a serious European character; it will be highly interesting to trace the progress and results of its last (and as it appears to me) most eventful campaign. The contest in the Basque provinces exhibits a perfect phenomenon in the history of warfare. The peasants of one little corner of the kingdom have now for four years bid defiance to the persevering exertions of the regularly organized Government of the country—supported as that Government has been by the resources of two of the most powerful nations

in Europe. The following pages—the result of personal experience during some months' travel and residence amidst the most stirring scenes of the mountain strife, will, I think, furnish an easy solution of the problem. Before I crossed the Pyrenees, I confess I was often amazed at the strange duration of this eventful struggle, and the facility with which a scanty band of Guerillas gradually swelled into a well organized and most formidable army. I went amongst this singular people—lived with them—shared in their toils and privations—and took my part in their dangers and amusements, till what surprised me before, surprises me no longer. The reader who may please to accompany me through the following pages, will find a faithful transcript of first impressions, daily observations, gradual enlightenment and final conviction. He will there find evidences of the natural resources and means of defence existing within those Provinces, sufficient to prolong the civil strife to an indefinite period:—of their occupation by a hardy, honest, generous,

intelligent and noble people, in whom the love of liberty and the contempt of death in its defence, seem instinctive;—who strangely combine the greatest love and aptitude both for the labours of the husbandman and of the soldier;—whose tastes are simple and frugal in the midst of native luxuries;—whose habits of patient and persevering resistance only increase with obstacles;—and, above all, whose enthusiasm in the cause of their persecuted Sovereign, so develop and employ these various qualities, as to shut out the remotest prospect of the war in Spain [being brought to any other termination than the complete triumph of their beloved CARLOS QUINTO.

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THE  
BASQUE PROVINCES.

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CHAPTER I.

I arrived at Bayonne the 3rd of September, 1836, preparatory to a tour in the Basque provinces and Navarre, as correspondent of the *Morning Post*, accredited to the court of Don Carlos. A single incident of my journey overland from Boulogne perhaps deserves to be mentioned in connexion with the object of my visit: it occurred a few hours previous to my arrival.

Our diligence was crossing the *Landes* at sunrise, amidst heavy gusts and thunder showers. We were in the midst of an immense waste, where heath, furze, wild mint and fern were thinly scattered on a mossy surface, reminding the traveller of the

bleakest parts of Connemara or Dartmoor. While slowly struggling through the sandy, moory, miry road, we observed approaching a drove of eight or ten of the most wretched looking travellers I ever saw, destitute of either coats or waistcoats, some without hats, some with ragged wallets, their weather-beaten and neglected visages (which appeared to have only been washed by the rain for the last week, and that very ineffectually) presenting an expression of debasement that I have not seen equalled even among the poverty-stricken creatures who annually arrive in crowds from the far west of the Emerald Isle to reap the harvest of England. Three couple walked in such uncomfortable proximity that it appeared certain their wrists were joined by something stronger than the tie of boon companionship. The others straggled singly, all followed by two well-mounted *gens-d'armes*, comfortably defended from the storm by their heavy cloaks.

My fellow passengers exclaimed with one voice, "*Voilà les Anglais!*" Another party of a dozen, similarly clad and attended, were met a mile further on; and a third drove, amounting to nearly twenty, about a mile and a half behind the second. Again and again the passengers exclaimed "*Voilà les Anglais!*" It was not alone of *forçats* or *pauvres misérables*, or of Christino-Carlist *Déserteurs*, they spoke or thought, but of "*Les Anglais.*"

These were indeed the English recruits of the boasted Westminster Legion, escaped from the lash of General Evans at St. Sebastian in the hope of finding impunity amongst the Carlists at Hernani, subsequently dismissed by Col. Merry as irreclaimable thieves and drunkards, next abandoned by the British Government and its Consul at Bayonne to seek food and shelter in a French prison, and to be finally driven back to their own country in a manner the most disgraceful that refined Gallic policy could suggest. The exclamations of my fellow travellers clearly indicated the success of the exhibition. Similar impressions were doubtless created in the minds of all "true Frenchmen" who travelled on or sojourned near *le grand chemin*, between Bayonne and Calais, not once and away, but thrice of a morning, or as long as the authorities could make this godsend of English abasement last day after day, and dozen after dozen, till they emptied their prisons of the 200 Westminster heroes. What Lord Palmerston could have expected to gain for the honour of the British name in the military eyes of *La Belle France* (ever sufficiently disposed to think lightly enough of it,) by permitting such a parade of all that could by possibility attach to that name, of unsoldierly, dishonourable, and contemptible, was more than I could compre-



hend; so I shall not attempt any explanation of the phenomenon.

The French police were at this period keeping a very punctilious watch along the Spanish frontier, and travellers who were suspected of wishing to enter the Carlist territories, were placed under strict *surveillance*, which required some good management on the part of friends, and not a little personal exertion, to evade or surmount. The pleasures of success in such exciting circumstances are, however, well worth the risk. Washington Irving, in one of his admirable brigand stories introduces an English traveller who had penetrated the Apennines and braved all the dangers of that stiletto climate, simply "because it was the only part of the world where one might hope to experience a new sensation." That opinion however, was delivered before the commencement of the present war in Spain, otherwise the very observing author who has travelled in that kingdom also, would not have left it without honourable mention. I can say, from my own experience, that the Englishman who may wish to drive away *ennui* by a sight of a *Christino* game of foot-ball at Barcelona with Carlist prisoners' heads, or sup on horrors at the café of the *Puerto del Sol* at Madrid, (where *platos* of their own captain-generals may be had, as specified in the *carte, au juste*

*priz*) will certainly acquire an additional appetite by the way, if he will take the trouble to enter Spain by the Pyrenees as I did. A gay young Breton, the Count de C——, who had held a commission in the French Lancers and had been page to Charles X, accompanied me from Bayonne. At four o'clock in the afternoon of the eighth of September, we walked leisurely out of the Spanish gate, and promenaded in the direction of *St. Jean de Luz*, leaving to good friends within the walls the task of forwarding our luggage, confidential papers, &c. We viewed the passing diligence as unconcernedly as possible, like people who were just about to turn back again, and when it was fairly out of sight, mended our pace to overtake our Basque guide, whose long legs and slow swinging steps kept ever in advance without the least apparent effort. We overtook him by incredible exertions but it was of no use, he would not walk near us. We spoke to him about the journey, but he only shook his head and said "*chito !*" (hush) and walked on. In about a couple of hours, just as it was getting dark, we lost sight of him, and to add to our comfort we came upon a couple of grim *douaniers* who were looking out for such contraband travellers, and who, if they thought we intended going farther than *St. Jean de Luz*, would have taken care to see us safely back to the city guard-house for the

night, and perhaps favour us next morning with an escort to Calais along with the deserters from St. Sebastian.

When the *douanier* disappeared, our Basque guide appeared again, and beckoned us into an Auberge where two or three savage looking comrades of his lay in wait, and stripped us of our surtouts, umbrellas, hats, cravats, coats and fine flowery waistcoats. They rummaged all our pockets and divided the spoils amongst them. One savage put on all our coats and tried to put on our hats, but they would not fit his shock head, and after vain efforts he crammed them into my (now his) surtout pockets. This fellow now insisted on thrusting me into his jacket, (a flimsy barragan flying open at the neck,) clapped his *boyna* (for all the world like Tam o' Shanter's blue bonnet,) on my head, and having made the Count assume a similar costume, disappeared with our clothes. They then thrust a morsel of bread and cheese down our throats, and laid before us some *vin ordinaire* and some *eau de vie*. The wine we found was vinegar, and proceeded to qualify it with the brandy, when the guide seized and spilled the headache draughts about the floor, and poured us out *eau de vie* alone. All this while the Aubergist was manœuvring the candle; now shading it with his hand from the window, now putting it

out, and now lighting it again by some incomprehensible savage chemistry. Between each bite and sup, I was fumbling to button the Basque jacket, and could'nt find the button holes. There were none ! The silent guide on a sudden seized the dirk-like bread knife with one hand, grasped my breast with the other, and immediately made half a dozen button holes for me, and we all sallied out regular French Basque mountaineers.

The Pyrenees appeared in the dusk like a wall before us. It fortunately came on to rain and blow, so the Basques struck off at once from the high road in a direction that we could merely perceive led to the highest and steepest of the range. We were wet through in three minutes, and found we had nothing further to fear from the weather,—saving the rheumatism. We were marching Indian-file fashion amongst stone-walled fields and houses, slippery water-courses, rough stiles and shingly bridle-roads with occasional slough bottoms for about an hour, the Basques chattering loudly, but whenever we opened our mouths even to utter a pious ejaculation, we found it shut with a low but imperative "*chito !*" We at length arrived at a low maize-thatched cottage, and on a signal all entered. When the door and windows were secured, and the fire blown up, I perceived my fetch, (the death fetch they call it in Ireland,) already sitting at the

fire It was the savage who ran off with our two coats, surtouts, hats, and gay flowered waistcoats, and who was now recklessly preparing some rashers and eggs, assisted by a very old and a very young woman, both with bright black eyes and gold earrings, several gold rings of all fashions on each hand, and their hair tied up in Basque handkerchiefs, so picturesquely brigand. We shivered with cold and wet, and our savage coat-bearer threw his spoils over our shoulders, while we snatched a hasty supper and gratefully received from the hands of the hostess the *eau de vie* which we no longer thought of adulterating with wine. The fetch-savage then robbed us of our coats again, and the pleasures of the march were renewed with additions and variations.

The night was pitch dark and we could not conceive how the first guide found his way, unless it were by instinct. I was next, and (my leader having no skirts to his jacket,) I caught at the sound of his tramps and plashes; the second Basque followed to pick me up when I fell, the third doing the same for my companion. The wind rose and blew off the rain, and blew open a star or two, so we could see the mountain we were climbing. I slipt, until stopped by a furze-bush, the prickles of which served as very sufficient memoranda to pick them out of my hands and legs next day. A tract

of fern now occurred, and I pulled myself up by them with great success, till I grasped a briar by mistake. A sheep track glistened in the starlight; I tried a step or two on it, and slid back twenty: at length I reached the summit, and turned to view the brilliant effect of the distant *Phare de Biarrhitz*, when a sudden gust swept me off, and back again into a ravine. Proceeding more cautiously I weathered the ridge, and contrived to descend on the other side. The march now became a monotonous plunging tramp through heath and furze for about a mile, varied only by a trip which gave me a violent cramp. The guides half pulled my leg off, at the same time commanding silence with their eternal "*Chito ! Chito !*" I observed a sudden halt and consultation in low whispers—" *La Douane !*" An awful pause occurred, which was broken by the welcome assurance "*Vaca, (a cow,) chito !*"

At length we reached the bottom, a ravine in which a dark torrent rushed. I could not ford it, nor step it, nor leap it, but the guides scrambled it, and got me over I don't know how. I prayed to be allowed to drink, but the guides could not hear me, (having lost my voice,) and the water was out of my depth below the bank, so I proceeded, enduring the torments of Dives, till a shallower stream afforded me something "*pour boire.*" I climbed a second slippery mountain, on the surface

of which tough Bent-grass, polished rush tufts and dwarf wiry wet sheep's-fescue grass, all seemed leagued to deprive me of footing. I fell again and again ; my cramp returned with violence, and there I lay kicking and plunging and anathematizing the mountain, till the guides got alarmed, lifted me on my feet and bore me up and along like a child in their grasp for five minutes, at the end of which they set me down beside a rock, exclaiming in triumph, "*España !*"

Here we were indulged with the luxury of a few minutes' repose. The soil was now all rock, so that the rain ran off as fast as it fell, and we lay comparatively high and dry. But we soon attained the same temperature of the mountains, for our Basque jackets were very thin, and we felt it necessary to keep moving to keep alive. Recommencing our route, we stumbled on a corpse : but 'twas only that of a deer. The guides found with their fingers the bullet-hole which ended its career about a month ago. There it lay after its last and fruitless escape, so much lost venison—too highly flavoured for man, and not yet discovered by the eagles and wolves. All the rest of our journey lay down-hill, or rather down torrent, for the mountain-side was a continuous watercourse, every square yard of which is tributary to the Rio Bidassoa, presenting great facilities of descent in

a variety of positions. On a sudden I found myself slipping down a clean-washed stratum of primitive slate rock, three perches long, which shone like a looking-glass in the starlight after I had passed it, though black to the eye above; at the bottom a small bed of soft alluvium about a foot deep, broke my fall. The guides soon pulled me out and placed me between them in Indian-file fashion again, so that when I slipped or fell, I was stopped by my predecessor.

This arrangement was particularly useful in the dwarf blackthorn district which followed. The stems were so small and so low that I could not see them, but each had an expansion of branches on the fishing-hook principle, nibbled bare by the hares and goats, so that my boots or trowsers were caught at every second or third step. Having cleared the summit, and the adjoining steep, we at last found ourselves safely walking in something like a regular stream with banks on both sides, and firm gravel at the bottom to prevent our slipping. But this was too good to last long, and the sound of a waterfall a few yards in advance intimated the occasion of the guides abandoning it, to clamber among the side rocks again. These, however, were rather steep, and the crevices for fingers and toes too shallow and far apart for safety, so the guides brought us down to the river again,



which here only afforded round, smooth, stepping stones, more slippery than the Cramp-Mountain; so I walked knee-deep for safety.

Next came the forest district, in which the shades of night lay so deep, that I could not distinguish the species of a single tree, although from the handful of leaves which I plucked in vexation from some boughs that the guides let slap into my face, I concluded that we passed under chestnut, holly, oak, enicina, box, wild cherry, crab, beech, and various species of fir trees. A broken nondescript branch came against my breast, and obliged me to pause for want of breath; another, much smaller and sharper, fortunately held its point so as to take my nose exactly between the eyes, and merely knocked me over, without injuring my sight. Stepping forward, while stooping to avoid an expected repetition of such a tilt, I at last unfortunately overstepped the forest boundary, and slipped down a precipitous bank; the sensation while falling was by no means agreeable; but it was of short duration, for a feathery birch tree received me safely, and the only difficulty which arose was on the part of the guides, as to how they should make their way to the spot, and extricate me from the position into which I had fallen, like a wedge between the branches of its forked stem.

But I cannot possibly describe all the incidents

characteristic of the journey, and it is better to leave the emulous traveller to experience some of the charms of novelty. Suffice it to say, that in about twelve hours after we walked out of Bayonne, we all limped into Vera, through the tail-race of a mill, and in about half an hour more, succeeded in rousing the Patrona of the Posada and making our way through the pigs and mules on the ground-floor to the camera above, where, while supper and beds were preparing, the Count and I made a variety of interesting discoveries,—viz. that our hands were full of thorns and covered with blood, our faces also tattooed *à la bruyère*,—my right leg immovable with a settled cramp, our trowsers torn, their straps hanging quartered, and our boots cut and slashed in the ornamental style of Spanish open-work. Our papers were wet through, our coats burst in the sleeves by the forcible entry of Basque shoulders, and our hats, when withdrawn from the pockets, were moulded and crumpled up into black pocket-handkerchiefs. My feet were swelled,—my boots would not come off, and I could not afford to let the guides cut them open, as my baggage was at the other side of the Pyrenees, and I had very little hopes of ever seeing it again, and sandals only are to be purchased at Vera,—so I was put to bed in my boots. I tried to sleep, but I was too much fatigued, and the floor was full of holes, and

the merriment of the three guides, the patrona, and the three señoritas, over their supper in the kitchen below, ascended for hours and banished sleep till broad daylight came to drive them to repose. Then, and not till then, did I taste the sweets of sleep.

## CHAPTER II.

THE valleys of Navarre present to the eye of the traveller some of the most splendid scenery in the world, and are at the present moment rendered doubly interesting, as being the theatre of a contest on which so much depends, not merely for Spain, but for Europe. There may be seen the gratifying spectacle of a people fighting at once for loyalty and liberty, for the principle of legitimacy and the exercise of practical freedom; for the rights of their sovereign and their own constitutional privileges. But the scenery, like the subject, is too extensive to be dealt with *en masse*, and well merits a separate description. The valley of the river of Bidassoa, along which I rode the day after I crossed the frontier, from its sources above Vera to its mouth at Irun and Fuenterabia, affords a richly characteristic specimen.

The river banks contract in many places to pre-

cipices, then expand again into patches of alluvion, highly cultivated, and exhibiting rich crops of maize, (the Indian corn of North America, and “*blé turque*” of France,) vines, melons, calabashes, potatoes, and legumes; the river rushes rapidly over scattered rocks, and the mountain sides are thickly studded, here with oaks, and there with chesnut trees in full bearing; the road frequently shrinks to a rough *escalier* bridle track for mules, and would be a perfect staircase if furnished with a balustrade to preserve the wayfarer from stumbling over its precipitous brink, which overhangs often the stream at a dangerous height. Eel weirs and salmon nets are seen in each rocky gap below, while every chink and fissure, around and above, are filled with luxuriant box trees, and brilliant flowering broom and heath. For miles the valley thus exhibits the alternate aspects of garden, orchard, forest, farm and fortress. In hundreds of places the passes might be defended by twenty resolute men against a host of invaders; or built up in a few minutes so effectively with loose rocks rolled down from above, that a Christino army of 20,000 men would have no choice but to return as they came, or stay and be shot, or crushed from the piled-up magazine of rocks above, if they continued their march along the bed of the torrent. Even Rodil, when, two years before, he led what was then an overwhelming

Christino force to burn and plunder Vera and slaughter the Carlist inhabitants, did not venture to enter the valley by the river road. He led his army over the bare rocky mountain at the source of the Bidassoa, and returned to the Bastan by a similar open track, having effected nothing but the destruction of the Capuchin convent, the massacre of a few peasants, too infirm or too foolishly confiding in his clemency to fly with the rest, planting in the minds of the survivors a bitter remembrance of his execrable vengeance, that can only be effaced with life. The bleak and blackened aspect of the convent, where the weary traveller and houseless outcast of a merciless civil war once found a hospitable shelter, would of itself be enough to rouse the sympathies of a people who for centuries had looked upon it as their granary, their hospital, their house of prayer and house of refuge ; but the Capuchins are now themselves "abroad," moving heaven and earth against the perpetrators of the outrage ; and powerful schoolmasters they are ; —some of them handle the musket and bayonet in the battalions of Navarre as well as if they had never worn a hood. But the women, always the most inveterate partisans and freest in their political invectives, are ever the most effective preachers and teachers ; and from the style of execration in which those of Vera joined at the mere mention

of the name of Rodil, and the indescribable tones and looks which betray so forcibly all that even Spanish curses cannot give vent to, I have not the slightest doubt that every mother's son in this valley is already imbued with a sufficient hatred of Christino rule to last his own life at least.

I have heard and read much of Spanish idleness, but as far as my observation goes, it does not justly apply to the Basque peasantry. Every available inch of ground of the Bidassoa valley is cultivated with the hoe. Attached to each little farm-house along the *escalier* track (where car or charette was never seen, and where all must be carried on mules' or men's backs) is a limekiln, and in most instances not a small one, to enable them to prepare that valuable manure for their maize-ground. I saw it laid on near Saline with an unsparing hand. The limestone for this purpose is brought from a quarry over the hills opposite Behobia, at the very mouth of the valley. Various mine-holes are to be seen where they have driven into the slate rocks in search of copper ore, and the mineral bearings strewed about the road indicate that the search was not made in vain. As we crossed the river with our mules in a ferry-boat (the guide-rope of which consisted of plaited vine-stalks), a Carlist *douanier* stepped down to the landing-place to look after his portion of affairs of state; but instead of sword or

gun he carried in one hand a hoe, with which he had been dressing his maize plantation, and in the other a set of night-lines ready baited for the eel fishery. Little mills overhung the bank, the plate-like wheels of which spun horizontally as the water-spout splashed thereon—thus enabling the upright axle-shaft to turn the millstone without additional gear, and making the most of the fall.

As we descended, the character of the valley, the river and the road, changed altogether; smooth stretches of the river occurred, and broad-bottomed *bateaux* were to be seen wafting produce or manure along or across it. The frontier line lies along the Spanish side of the river for two or three miles, and brings the French *douane* into action in a most *outré* and inconvenient position, right across both it and the high road of the valley. French wines and brandy, cloth, linen and leather, are however wanted in the provinces, and find their way in the dark with great facility, paying a small duty at the Carlist custom houses along the frontier, which I was assured, the Spanish contrabandists make it a point of honour and of patriotism not to evade. The bridge of Behobia formed the connecting link of this outlying *mal parta* territory with France, and was then held on the Spanish side by about 120 Christinos, who occupied half a dozen old houses forming the famous debateable

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station, *la tête du pont de Behobia*. The Christinos had only four pieces of artillery for its defence (a four, a six, an eight pounder, and a mortar that throws forty-eight pound shells) and the Carlist artillery at Irun might, if brought and planted on St. Marcial above it, have battered the old walls into the river in the space of ten minutes. But the French authorities forbid any artillery practice upon the frontier on the plea of the point of national honour, besides they have very excellent quarters for a *petit corps* of observation in some high substantial houses attached to their Bidassoa Hotel, which is called for distinction sake *la queue du pont*; and their windows there might be broken by the over zealous Carlist balls, after passing through the *caserne* of the Christinos. The long wooden bridge was a favorite promenade for both parties, French and Christino. Indeed it was rather a matter of necessity for the garrison if they would take the air at all, to keep their old houses between them and the Carlist mountaineers. I saw several of the *batteaux* laden with the green maize stalks for forage, pass under the bridge to the Carlist consumers at Irun and Fuentarabia, despite the double guard of French and Spanish functionaries; a tolerably strong indication of the successful pertinacity with which labour in this valley seeks and finds its reward at market, despite of the

"Guns, drums, trumpets, blunderbuss, and thunder"

of the Behobian authorities professedly in the opposite interest. However, a river is a bad line of demarcation between a productive nation and a consuming one. Commerce or contraband easily drives a boat and six through it. Both France and Spain recognise the principle of "the summits of the water partings" for their common frontier line along the tops of the Pyrenees, and have acted on this rule disinterestedly wherever the ground at each side is good for nothing. The exceptions, however, are (as might be expected) *tout au contraire*, as wide asunder in theory and practice as Lord Palmerston's principle of non-intervention and his warfare in Guipuscoa and Biscay.

The Navarrese seem made for their mountains. Clad and armed in the lightest and simplest manner, they skip along the rocks like deer. They wear blue cloth bonnets, (similar to that of the French Basques which our guides wore, but extended trencher-wise by a hoop of willow,) short jackets, with linen trowsers in summer. The *voluntario*, who accompanied our mules as a guard of honour, seemed rather to prefer running than walking. His pace excited my admiration, for he got over the staircases, up or down hill, as if his legs were springs and the rocks Indian rubber; but nearly all whom we met seemed to possess the

same happy elasticity of step. Several *facciosos* passed us at this courier trot, going and coming, carrying their coats over one shoulder, and their guns club fashion, over the other; the bayonet (which has a useful slide ring to secure it on the muzzle) is worn at the right side in a broad strap round the waist. Twenty cartridge tubes of tin are borne in front, attached to the same waist belt, and secured from all danger of wet or explosion by a falling flap of leather. This was the arrangement of Zumalacarregui, and I could easily believe that one soldier so accoutred is as effective for mountaineer warfare as two burthened in the style of the French troops of the line, with knapsack and lengthy cross belts, cartouche boxes and bayonets, swords which they never use, and stocks which really deserve the name. As I observed in my ride the two species of soldiers at opposite sides of the river, it struck me what a vast saving of weight it would be to the latter, if their belts were made a little longer, and their swords, bayonets and cartouche boxes allowed to trail on duty and parade. A heavy knapsack would hang a Basque or Navarrese mountaineer, and a stock would choke him or be burst open by the free play of the muscles and veins in his neck, which experience the full benefit of sun wind and rain all the year round. A small bag or net slung over his shoulder carries all he

wants or cares for. His great superiority of movement, however, appeared to be the result of the simple and judicious way in which his feet were attired in slight canvas sandals with hempen soles that just protected the toes and heels, loosely tied over the instep and ankle,—thus leaving the whole powerful and complex organ to play with all the efficiency which nature conferred on its beautiful organization.

Having made a detour above Saline, and over the celebrated Mount St. Marcial, to avoid the interference of the French *Douane* of the river, and Christino garrison of the bridge, we descended into Irun, a small town tolerably clear of suburbs, situated on a hill side which rises gently from the rich tract of alluvion that lies at the mouth of the river. It is surrounded by walls (rather slight indeed, being merely those of its court yards and gardens,) but pierced at every approachable position with loopholes for musketry. The gates are slenderly fortified with galleries, also pierced with crenelles which afford tolerable positions for a defence by infantry; but instead of muskets and bristling bayonets, we only saw half-a-dozen pair of bright black eyes levelled at us, and heard the joyous laughter of as many girls who were going to the fountain, each with her picturesque *cruche* on her head. As we returned from the *Comisario's*

office, whither we went to obtain our passports, a sentinel appeared there: possibly he had been on parade, or at dinner, or at a dance before the *Casa de Villa* a few yards farther on, but he might just as well (except for the honour of the thing) have been away altogether, for not only was the whole town devotedly Carlist, but also the whole country around it.

There were only two points from whence Irun had any surprize to fear, Behobia and Passages—which were watched with jealous care night and day by small advanced parties, and although not above a mile and a half from the *tête du pont*, Irun was considered secure against surprize. The Christinos lately planted the large forty-eight pound mortar on the bridge, with the hope of being able to send a few shells to disturb its repose; but on trying the experiment, they found they could not even reach the *caserne* that lies midway on the bank of the river, where the Carlist *partida* was stationed to keep them in check. But the town itself was tolerably well prepared to give a warm reception to any hostile force that might, by the chances of war, have been able to drive back the outlying parties. Lord John Hay's steam-boats were so near, that the inhabitants could never be certain that they might not see them all some fine morning in their little bay, but that did

not appear to trouble them much, recollecting as they did, the small success that attended his lordship's previous essay there. In the first place the strong *Casa de Villa* had been insulated, and the windows built up, so as to be reduced to loop-holes. Then, each house in the *Plaza Real* and in the principal avenues commanding it, was converted into a separate fortalice by strong boards placed in the balconies and pierced for musketry; but the main strength of the place consisted in a small star-fort recently erected on a hill to the south-west, which commanded not only the town but the shore, and all the approaches, whether from the two hostile stations before-mentioned, or (if it should so happen) from their own friendly positions of Tolosa and Fuentarabia. This had been hastily thrown up since Evans' visit to the vicinity, and contained six platforms for heavy cannon, with intermediate parapets entrenched for infantry. Four guns of eighteen pounds' calibre were already planted, and rendered it a position not to be encountered without peril. Three deep covered ways communicated with the *Casa de Villa*, and two other fortified houses outside the town. We found a shed full of carpenters and blacksmiths, engaged in the repair of two additional battering pieces which appeared to have been long on the invalid

list. I there saw a disabled piece, supplied with a wooden munnion, and I was assured "it would work well." A young Navarrese officer, with whom I was discussing the strength of the place, gave me a singular illustration of his ideas of military science, by declaring "that Don Carlos would do much better without these walls and forts and skulking places. Zumalacarregui conquered without such things. The Guipuscoans indeed might want them," but, (said he with emphasis,) "the Navarrese are able to fight without them."—" *Los Navarros son toros en el campo!*" (The Navarrese are bulls in the field.) However, the Guipuscoans seemed to believe in the value of artillery, and I found in several workshops the soldier artizans busily engaged in preparing waggons, frames, wheels, ammunition boxes for field-pieces and battering trains, grape, canister-shot, &c. One of the four eighteen pounders mounted in the fort had already seen service, and having been dismounted by the fracture of its munnions, had been allowed to repose in peace until its country required its aid once again, when it had been rendered effective by a very simple addition of a strong clasp, bearing pivots of wrought iron, which the Artilleros declared would answer the purpose just as well. They were

taking a similar method with one of the two others, which were yet required to complete the defences, maintaining that they would last as long as the guns, an assertion which I could not gainsay.



## CHAPTER III.

THE town of Fuentarabia is distant from Irun about two miles to seaward; all the way between lies a rich tract of alluvial soil, teeming with grain and legumes, in itself a sufficient granary for the garrison of both towns, if they were shut out from other supplies, or if the miracle could come to pass, (which Evans and Cordova were silly enough to boast their ability to achieve,) if all the rest of the harvest of the Basque provinces and Navarre could be destroyed in the fields. This luxuriant plain is gradually excluding and filling up the little bay of Fuentarabia on the Spanish side. It was, when I walked through it on the 10th of September, a perfect magazine of maize and alubias: the stems of the former serving as supports for the climbing tendrils of the latter, and both growing together with a luxuriance that rivalled, if it did not surpass, any thing that the carse of Gowrie could ex-

hibit. Potatoes also are grown there, and though they thrive on similar sandy soils higher up the river, they do not appear to agree with the saline impregnation which all the ground at its *débouchement* contains. Indeed, the farmers are not content with the natural richness of the soil, but are day after day adding to it by boat-loads of manure and sea-stuff, (dredged from the numerous canals with which this level tract is intersected in all directions) and producing all the beneficial effects of warping by dry manual labour, the gradual agency of which appears to have elevated the surface to its present secure height above the level of the spring tides. Excellent crops of tomatas, melons, calabashes, pimento and tobacco, are also to be seen here and on the hills around, which present more the appearance of gardens than farms, sprinkled over as they are with apple and peach trees, and substantial cottages with vines creeping up into all the balconies, where seeds, fruits, and forage are stored to dry or ripen in a blazing sunshine. The fishermen also enliven, and doubtless, enrich the scene. The little bay within the bar presents a secure harbour for their purposes, communicating as it does with all the sheltering canals, and the high road from Irun to Fuentarabia which runs across them. The scene of agricultural industry which this district presents, is only to be

equalled by what Tuscany affords, where the same good custom prevails, of letting the land on the *metayer* system; the landlord providing the capital required for stock, manure, repairs, &c, the tenant finding labour, and both sharing the crop in equal proportions. Here, however, the farmer is in most cases the proprietor of the soil, and reaps the fruit of his own labour, without any drawback for rent, having held possession of his land from time immemorial, and claiming a concurrent title of nobility. The number of houses in the Basque provinces, both in towns and in the country, which exhibit coats of arms sculptured in stone attesting their hereditary claims to heraldic honours and dignities, is highly characteristic.

As I approached Fuentarabia and saw the defenceless condition of the place from which Evans had retreated so shamefully, I was struck with surprise. I could scarcely believe that any one with such pretensions to skill in the military art, and supported by a force of 6,000 men, had shrunk from the attack of such a heap of ruins as it presents. The town is built on a rocky cliff, at the side of the bay, and was once magnificently fortified, as may be perceived by the remaining curtain of cut stone which faces the approach from Irun, and serves the little garrison for a ball-alley, but which Evans did not face as he descended from the hills in his march

from Passages. In fact he could not see any thing but ruins from his position. There is not a single bastion left standing round the town. The crumbled walls are overthrown, in many places to their very foundations;—sad memorials of the result of French and English interference in the affairs of the Peninsula. Notwithstanding the great care formerly bestowed on the water-defences of the town, nothing now remain of them but the marshy traces of ditches, and the town is approachable at all sides dry-shod. There is scarcely as much of its ancient upper works left as would serve to shelter a marksman. The destroyers did not spare even the parapet wall of the ball-alley. The only outwork, as Evans saw plainly enough, consists of a slight wall, recently built on the ruins of the old ramparts, pierced with holes for musketry; and this is of so rough, yet unsubstantial a construction, that many a farmer in England would not think it good enough for his haggard. The side at which Evans appeared is the most accessible of all. Where the fosse is not filled up with the fallen curtain, it is peaceably planted with maize,—maize is also planted on what remains of the rampart promenade above; and any of the Westminster heroes who ever had the slightest treadmill practice, might have marched step by step up the rubbish, without breaking rank, till they came to vault over the wall

at the top, (and the most serious danger then would be, that, if a dozen of them laid hold of it together, they would pull it down upon themselves;) but at the angles, where the great bastions have fallen abroad at an angle of forty-five degrees, even Ducrow's troop of horse could have gone up and over all at a stage gallop. The real defence of the little ruined town was—first, the presence of 250 soldier peasants within, ready to stand by each other and the cause of Don Carlos to the death; and secondly, the sympathetic cowardice of 6,000 mercenaries without, who well knew their General's want of ability to lead, and their own state of demoralization and disinclination to follow. His excuses of want of scaling ladders and breaching cannon, and his military foresight, or far-sight, of the danger of being taken in flank by 300 men two miles off, at Irun, are, to any one on the spot, thoroughly ridiculous. The place is all one breach already, and, in the fallen fragments of its former greatness, presents a series of scaling ladders as favourably placed as any body with the use of his hands and legs could desire; and it is plain, that if he had led his men boldly to the escalade, they would have been perfectly sheltered from the cannon of the little citadel by the interposition of the houses adjoining the ramparts. Leaving apart all the moral obstacles on the outside, the only material difficulty which

presented itself there (and of which in fairness I cannot refuse to give General Evans the benefit,) was the slippery state of the ground on that occasion, the day being especially selected for the purpose by particular desire of Lord John Hay and the gallant General, who left St. Sebastian that morning in a regular Spanish shower which telegraphed itself in full operation all along the heights of Guadalupe. The excuse of the movement being a mere *reconnaissance en force* was the most ridiculous of all, for so intent was Evans on sitting down before the town, that he brought his military library along with his camp furniture from St. Sebastian.

I subsequently saw between thirty and forty volumes on the table of Monsieur Lizoire, the engineer officer who presided over the powder mill and magazine near Tolosa, and who had the honour of making a prize of them in a Capuchin convent on the hills, where the general had fixed his head quarters for the time, and doubtless calculated on sitting down at his ease, like my Uncle Toby, to play out an amateur game of the siege of Fuentarabia. Very useful books they are—"Vauban on Fortification, folio edition with plates," scarce; "*Traité Complet de l'Art de Fortification, publié par autorité, Paris, 1745*;"—" *Traité de Physique, par Antoine Ribas*;"—"A treatise on the Differential Calculus," and several of less mili-

tary and scientific pretensions, besides others which branch into *Belles Lettres* and the regions of sentiment and imagination : all of which M. Lizoire, prized highly, and referred to frequently in terms which indicated that his *reconnaissance* in the matter was rather stronger and more lasting than that which the General indulged in towards Fuentarabia. The issue of that day proves clearly (if proof yet be wanted of what all history so plainly illustrates,) that it is not on the condition of walls, however artfully or artlessly constructed, that the issue of a contest depends, but on the spirit which the combatants bring to level or uphold them.

I visited Fuentarabia the day before Don Carlos entered it in September. Scarcely had I arrived when a rumour flew through the little town of "*El Rey viene*," (the king is coming;) the townsmen ran up to the steeple and set all the bells whirling in deafening peals. The houses were emptied of their inhabitants. Men, women, and children, ran out to welcome him and to congratulate each other on the honour of the visit. A woman seized a gun, loaded it in double quick time, and fired it off close by my ear. The children marched and beat time on their caps for drums. Everybody was ready for the parade, and all was animation and delight, till, alas ! it was ascertained it was a false annunciation and that they must wait another day ; and then

every body crept slowly back, and went about their business with altered countenances. After viewing the town and examining the strength and commanding position of the little citadel, I own I felt inclined to make some allowance in favour of Evans's retiring policy in the absence of his battering train; for although he might do without it very well on the outside, he would certainly stand in some need of it within, ere he could have dealt definitively with the garrison. The citadel or central keep is all that remains of the magnificent castle or palace built by Charles the Fifth of Germany, of which the ruins all around exhibit traces of considerable strength and grandeur. The citadel, which still stands entire, doubtless owes its preservation to the extreme solidity with which it was constructed. Its bomb-proof roof is formed of stone arches five feet thick at the crown, presenting a level floor above, on which four guns of six pounds, eight pounds, twelve pounds, and eighteen pounds calibre, traversed freely. A tiled roof was recently added to protect the artilleros from the weather, but considering the danger from bombs, I think they would have been safer without it. At the base of this fort are bastions stretching into and commanding the Plaza Real and the main street. The entire presented on close inspection, a rather formidable collection of loop



holes for the reception of an assailing party, and aided as the citadel was for distant effect by the *Fuerte del Parque* at Irun, the fortified station at *Torre Alto* between it and the mountains, by the old fort *de Iguer* at the mouth of the bay, mounting three large guns as Lord John Hay may remember, and, lastly, a strong moveable force in the provinces always on the alert, this portion of the coast did not appear particularly inviting to visitors from St. Sebastian and Passages.

## CHAPTER IV.

DURING the month of September, Don Carlos and his staff were daily occupied on a tour through the provinces, inspecting the troops at every station, minutely examining the condition of each fortress, the relative positions of the opposing frontier posts, and the works in progress at each of the royal manufactories. He was accompanied by his nephew, the Infante Don Sebastian ; the universal minister, Señor Erro ; the Secretary of state and dispatch, Señor Sierra ; the Secretary of war, Señor Morejon ; the Vicar-General, Don Juan Echevarria ; the commandant-general of Guipuscoa, Guibelalde ; and a crowd of officers, civil and military. The weather was delightful, and the fields were all alive with the peasantry tending their crops. These, as the royal train rode along, threw by their work for miles at each side of the way and hastened to meet it or run along with the *cortége*, shouting with enthusiasm

*"Viva Neustro Señor !"* *"Viva Carlos Quinto !"*

On the morning of the 13th he entered Irun amidst salutes from the fort and the acclamations of the whole population, for the very children are warm partisans of "*Nuestro Señor El Rey*," and little boys and girls unceremoniously pushed away their big brothers (the soldiers) to get a sight of him. The *cortége* partook of a hearty breakfast at the Custom-house, after which the company took horse for Fuentarabia, where Don Carlos inspected the little citadel and slender fortifications which enabled its garrison of 250 to resist the attack of twenty-four times their number, aided by seven British vessels of war in the bay. He left Fuentarabia at noon and took the mountain road to Lezo and Renteria, thence by Oyarzun and Astigarraga to Hernani, where he slept. Next day he reached Tolosa whither I followed and just arrived in time to present my letters of introduction to Señor Erro and other officers of the court, previous to their departure with the King, and to make arrangements for accompanying him in his further progress.

On the morning of the 16th September, he left Tolosa, and continued his tour of inspection southward, amidst the enthusiastic *vivas* of each village he passed through. All coveted his presence and contended for the honour of his residence; but the

Navarrese were most pressing, and insisted that it was then their turn. After completing his survey of the Guipuscoan frontiers and places of strength, he pursued his route thither by Legoretta, Villa Franca, Segura, Cegama, and continued it unchecked by the approach of night, over the dangerous *Sierra de San Adrian*, a branch of the steep and rocky Cantabrian range which defied the progress of the conquering Saracens of old. The track was so imperfectly marked, (having, in many places, been swept away by torrents,) and the darkness beneath the shade of the forest chesnuts and encinas was so extreme, that the guides lost sight of the path, and all except the Infant Don Sebastian were obliged to dismount and feel their way through the forest. After a painful march through heavy rain, loose rocks, and mire, they arrived late at night at Iturmendi where the royal escort slept. Next day they pursued their way across the valley of the Borunda, the Sierra de Andia, and the Amescoas, and arrived safe at Estella. These night marches I found were matters of course to the King and his suite. He was certainly well schooled in adversity on his first arrival in the mountains when he was chased by the troops of Rodil and Lopez for six months continuously, often in imminent danger of being captured, and was obliged to change his route and resting-place, night after night, till the wildest

solitudes of the Amescosas became familiar to him. I was also on the road to Estella on the night of the 16th, and travelled across another portion of the same mountain barrier which separates Guipuscoa from Navarre, accompanied by an officer attached to the Royal service, who was making the best of his way to join the *Cuartel Real*; thus I was afforded a tolerably fair opportunity of becoming acquainted with the difficulties attaching to night travelling in the Basque provinces, even on a *Camino Real* (a royal road) to the court. The zig-zag ascents and descents honoured with that title were originally about nine feet wide, formed of a pavement, massive on the outside, but small within, and stayed from sliding down the hill by cross stretchers of wood. At either side the torrent forms a bed for itself, in which (if by miracle an entirely fair day leaves it empty,) the mules laden with the wines of Navarre, the brandies of France, or the fish of the Bay of Biscay, find it more convenient to march; for the boundary pavement, loosened in most places from its proper lines, presents a series of stumbling blocks, numerous enough to weary the most enduring patience, and spoil the sweetest temper of man or mule.

The light departed when we had attained about a quarter of the ascent, and I proceeded hand-in-glove with the Navarrese guide for the

remainder of the night. We were very fortunate, as he only lost his path and stumbled with me into the side ditch three times. The mules, too, took similar liberties, but in such a knowing way that they neither hurt themselves or us. My companion rode his horse the whole way, to keep him up, and the animal had not a scratch on his knees, when he dismounted at Echarrri-Arranaz where we passed the night, and where next morning the *Medico* of the Pueblo lifted up his hands and eyes at the idea of the rider's temerity. He had the commandant of a battalion under his lancet just then, as the penalty of a similar attempt on the same road an hour or two before we descended—horse and man having fallen into a ravine and experienced severe injuries before they could be extricated.

On our descent, we had passed through a bivouac of 100 Guipuscoans, drafted from the lines above St. Sebastian to take their turn of service, in the King's body guard at Estella. The poor fellows had in the darkness of the forest lost their guide and their way as well as their commandant, and were dispersed along the mountain side shouting for each other, joking as usual, singing their provincial songs, endeavouring to strike lights for their cigars amidst the heavy rain, and singing still. These troops were serving (in turn) as the King's body

guards. They had been marching all day, and were keeping it up all night without thinking of rest, to meet Don Carlos at Estella, until fairly stopped by the difficulty of the route—a distance of sixty miles, counting the zig-zag traverses of the Sierra;—but this was quite an ordinary affair. Next day, we arrived safely in company with Don Carlos and his suite at Estella, amidst the ringing and whirling of all the bells in all the steeples, and the salutes of a couple of field pieces which stood in the principal Plaza.

The towns in Navarre and the Basque provinces present a singular aspect to an English eye. The houses are uniformly constructed on the patriarchal plan of accommodating the quadrupeds of the establishment on the ground floor. The horses and mules enter through the same hall door, or rather gateway with the rest of the family, and occupy the front parlour in peace and comfort as their share of the house, unless when it may be wanted for a shop, and then the back parlour is given up to them instead. All the doorcases and window-frames are without exception constructed of cut stone, and the latter in the basement story are universally secured by strong and tastefully wrought iron bars which stand in the place of glass, and with such a climate (and such a population) as Spain possesses, are doubtless much preferable.

The walls too are built so substantially that they seem intended not merely for time but eternity; thus each house is capable of sustaining a siege, limited only by the fragility of the iron-studded door, and pantiled roof. The latter is generally laid double, as if tiles were more plentiful than mortar, but a grenade will speedily gain access, and bring the little garrison to terms. Houses are set on fire in almost every trifling affair on the frontiers, but it seems to do the walls no harm; and as soon as the tide of war flows somewhere else, the owner cuts down a few trees and digs up a few dollars, calls some carpenters and tilers together, and fits up his family mansion again in a fortnight, fully as good as new.

Estella is situated in one of the most sheltered basins in Navarre; it is perfectly surrounded by mountains, and of course indefensible against any force which can plant a twelve-pounder on the adjoining heights. The Christinos abandoned it to Zumalacarregui after his successes in the Basque provinces, and he immediately levelled the few mural defences it possessed, trusting to the mountains for his fortresses and to his good generalship to render them available for all his purposes, destitute as he was of artillery. However, before his death the Carlists became better supplied with cannon, and they have been getting up fortifications in Estella



again. It is now surrounded with a slight wall pierced with loopholes for musketry; and its gates are surmounted with additional parapets and crenelles. The southern bridge, looking towards the Christino line, is built up and similarly battlemented; the old Roman wall and towers are put in requisition by the aid of platforms within, and an outlying guard watches the picturesque heights which overhang it, where may yet be seen the remains of an old Moorish castle, surmounted by a gigantic iron crucifix planted in christian triumph on the ruins. Estella though lying within two hours' march of the Christinos, (and within their view on the 14th September when they pillaged the country) has never since been entered by them. It is like a wire rat-trap, very easy to get down into, but impossible to ascend out of in the face of an enemy who possesses the country, and who could actually build them in at all the passes they might attempt to make their exit by. In the meantime a small fort intended for artillery has been erected at the northern side of the town, crowning the wall of loopholes, which when planted with cannon will give the possessors the command of the town from thence, and prevent its occupation by an enemy: but this fort will itself need to be supported by three or four others to form a circle of defence on the several summits around the town,

ere it can be looked on as a secure position. The only pieces of artillery in Estella during my visit were the two brass four pounders that saluted us, the famous Armina and Thebano cast at Seville, and taken by Zumalacarregui in the decisive double victory which he obtained under the walls of Vittoria. They were too small for battering with any effect the houses and casernes fortified along the Christino line, and were therefore allowed to stand in the Plaza Santiago, where the artillerymen went through their field exercises every morning, and on festival days fired a salute, until they were ordered on service of a more serious aspect before Bilbao.

The morning after my arrival (Sunday, 18th Sept.,) I witnessed the assemblage of a body of troops destined for an expedition ostensibly into Lower Arragon, but really into the Asturias, under the conduct of the Brigadier-Generals Elio and Pablo Sanz, to attend the consecration of a banner under which they were to march to achieve new successes in the paths that Gomez had opened. The guard of the King also paraded in the Plaza Mayor nothing the worse for their sixty miles ramble, having got a few hours' sleep since they arrived in Estella, which they would have entered in one stretch if the darkness and want of guides had not effectually checked them. Zumalacarregui sometimes marched his men as far to surprise the

enemy, but the Christinos profit so little by Carlist examples that the latter slept soundly at Estella, only seven miles from the masses of the enemy under Irribarren. The troops for the expedition appeared in marching order, about 2,000 infantry and 150 cavalry. They were reviewed by the King, who afterwards entered at their head into the great Church of St. Juan, and attended at the solemn consecration of their banner and the performance of high mass. The King's band (taken prisoners at Ochandiano by Zumalacarregui, and at once transferred into the Royal service as something too fine for *faccioso* warfare,) took an effective part in the ceremonial: they played with considerable taste and formed a very attractive portion of the accessories to the court of Don Carlos. An office was celebrated on the occasion, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, whose especial guidance and protection was implored for the army, of which, according to Spanish etiquette, she was solicited to become *Generalissima*; and an appropriate sermon was preached by Padre Giel, superior of the order of Jesuits, lately banished from Madrid. The learned father attributed all the ill success which had attended the arms of Don Carlos to the want of faith of those who wielded them, and warmly exhorted his hearers to trust implicitly to the never failing guardian care of *Mater Dolorosa* for those

who loved and honoured her. The soldiers destined for the expedition paid the deepest attention, received their consecrated banner afterwards at the hands of the King from his balcony with loud acclamations, and marched away with light and merry hearts, confident in the watchful and all sufficient care of the Holy Virgin, and making the rocky vineyards resound with their songs, which echo brought back to us long after they were out of sight. They were wild-looking, sun-burnt fellows, of all sizes and ages that could handle a musket, with whom fatigue and danger appeared to go for nothing. It appeared as if they were only going on a party of pleasure, so gay and careless did they seem when once beyond the restraints which the presence of the King, the court, and the church imposed. Their clothing was not very uniform, but they had all comfortable frock-coats, and seemed as if more attention to their regimentals would be thrown away on them. So much did they value their ease and freedom of motion, they would evidently feel their necks in prison in our soldiers' stocks; and tight-laced boots would be to them the torture of the garrote. They were, however, more fully equipped than the cavalry which accompanied them, which were of all arms, just as they could be spared from other services, *carbineros, lanceros, &c.*

Two very striking and soldierlike characteristics seemed to pervade all classes—points in which they strongly resembled the Irish peasantry, viz. a thorough contempt, or rather carelessness of danger, and a disposition to make shift with worse in the absence of better. But vices and virtues border very closely on each other, and I could not admire their combined effect in the appearance of their equipments, especially in the *insouciance* which many of the infantry *cañanías*, or cartridge-belts, presented at each extremity right and left where the magazine pouches are placed. Of these several were unbuttoned, several had lost their buttons, and the ends of the papered parcels peeped out, exposed to rain and fire. One little troop of cavalry marched on the expedition armed with lances alone, and spurred along as if they felt themselves a match for the Queen's *carbineros* armed with swords and pistols to boot. Courage, however, is almost everything. It has supplied the place of discipline, arms, and equipments hitherto, and now the army is gradually attaining all those, it will, no doubt, render it doubly formidable. The very women are warriors in spirit. I had an unexpected illustration of this in my ride to Estella. Having requested the officer who accompanied me, to point out the positions of the battle of Lescano, which was fought in the presence of Don Carlos,

on the third of October, 1834, when 300 Guipiscoans and Navarrese drove El Pastor with 600 Christinos through the town and into the mountains. We left the high road at Villa Franca, and took the mountain path leading to the scene of combat and the execrable *Camino Real* already described. My companion was pointing out to me the station of the King and the line of retreat of El Pastor through the maize fields, when two women who were standing at a cottage adjacent (talking to some soldiers who appeared to be, like ourselves, on their march across the mountains,) came up to us "Ah, Señor," exclaimed one, addressing the officer by my side, "we were just talking of you and the battle. But, God bless you! you are altered for the better very much since that day when you rode on the tall *jumarre* into the town after Jauregui and his Christinos—your face all seamed with the small-pox, and one eye still shut up with it, making you look more like a corpse than a soldier. But I know your voice. Ah! you ought to be grateful to the Virgin and to this woman beside me, for saving your life that day; for it was she that rushed out and warned you to stop and beware of the ambush in the maize behind her house, that would have shot you dead if you had gone ten steps further; and she it was

who sent you back to your men, and told you how to rout the ambush by the fields."

So it was. The women of the village were in the midst of the danger, exhorting, encouraging and giving intelligence to the King's troops of every motion of the enemy, at the risk of their lives. Had the Christinos been victors their most merciful proceeding would have probably been to set fire to the houses of all who had evinced such strong sympathy for the cause of Don Carlos. A villager who undertook to show us our route to Atoun across the fields, pointed out the spot where he recollected to have seen my companion posted alone on his tall steed on the top of a bridge which he was ordered to defend, in advance of his division,—a conspicuous mark for the enemy, by a white hat with a broad leaf which he wore to defend his yet suffering features from sun, wind and rain,—having forbidden his men whose cartridges were reduced to three each, to waste a single one on a long shot. "Here!" said another peasant who accompanied us, "is the spot where your old serjeant fell, and there the flank man of the company was killed by the shots that missed you." They could have repeated to us every circumstance of the battle if we could have spared time to listen to them; but a baggage mule of

our party had gone astray, and we were obliged to hasten on to search for it. On arriving at the posada of Atoun, a little further on, nobody seemed to know or care anything about our mule, our luggage or ourselves, till we began to ask them about their remembrance of the battle, and then they soon recognised my companion as one of the leaders of the brave *Guias de Navarra* who had gained such honour that day. They inquired affectionately after his white hat with the broad leaf: the alcalde, who kept the posada, insisted on opening a bottle of his best wine, and before we had finished it, went out and found our mule, which had been safely reposing in his stable all the while.

The war in Navarre and the Basque Provinces is no longer carried on for Don Carlos by the natives alone. It is estimated that seventy thousand have already fallen (on both sides,) since the war began. Scarcely a man of forty years of age is now to be seen in the Carlist ranks there. The great majority are between seventeen and twenty-five. In a ride with some friends near Estella, we spoke to a company of the valiant guides of Navarre, whom we met on the way, and whom one of our party recognised as having been an active pursuer of El Pastor, in the battle of Lescano already mentioned. A fine intelligent lad of the party, who could not yet be twenty, bore in his breast a



bullet wound of that day's conflict. My companion inquired for several brave fellows who had fought there. "Ah, he is dead!" was the constant reply. They counted sixteen who yet remained in their company out of eighty who survived that battle. Zumalacarregui named them "The Guides," which words bore a meaning after his own heart, and signified the first to march into the fire, and lead the rest to charge with the bayonet.

The Carlist ranks are, however, very effectively filled by *pasados* from the Castiles, Andalusia, and Arragon. Don Basilio Garcia collected 300 recruits from the latter kingdom during his recent foray, (it does not deserve a better term,) together with fifty-two horses, but the latter part of his booty were so harassed by the forced march to which they were subjected, that it was found necessary to allow them to rest and refresh for months before being ranked for duty. The men cared nothing about rest, and were daily drilled and exercised in Estella, so that I had constant opportunities of becoming acquainted with their figures, features, gait and gestures, and I must say that a more extraordinary set of recruits I never saw in my life. They almost defied classification, even with the aid of the drill-serjeant, the army tailor and the armourer. Their muskets and bayonets were

all new and bright, their cartridge belts sat tightly, their brown surtouts hung comfortably around them, tho' without any pretensions to a fit, and their raven black heads of hair preserved something like an appearance of uniformity despite their many shaped *boynas*, hats, handkerchiefs, turbans and night-caps, and in many cases, the absence of all head-gear; but in every other item of military concord they differ most whimsically, appearing on parade in shoes, slippers, leggings, boots or sandals. Men of mature age stood beside boys; giants (and well made giants too) overlooked short, broad shouldered pigmies, who reminded one of Scott's "Black Dwarf." Some were fine loose-limbed fellows; others, compact and strongly knit; others, meagre and wiry. Their features varied so much, they seemed to be brought from the antipodes. Lads with snipe faces stood side by side with men of uncertain ages, whose cheek-bones of Calmuck breadth astonished the beholder. Here aquiline features harmonized with fierce mustachios, and there the opposite Milesian and beardless concavity of profile made the beholder imagine that he was gazing on an emigrant from the county Galway. It appeared evident at first sight, that the kingdom of Arragon was not peopled by a single race. Probably each valley sends forth a tribe as dis-

tinct in origin as in features and stature. The Navarrese affect to condemn them all, (every kingdom of Spain looks down on the other,) and to convey an estimate of their capacity in the following story :

“ An Arragonese *muletero* came to a broken bridge, which the animal he drove would not pass, either for beating or coaxing. Tired out at length the driver exclaimed, ‘ God may have given you more sense, but he has given me more strength,’ and taking the beast up in his arms, he carried him across.”

However, after the first unfavourable impressions subsided, these Arragonese created an interest that was more likely to increase than diminish. They had all dark, intelligent and fearless eyes, but with rather a cruel expression, and went through their exercises with a degree of ease and self-possession that indicated conscious strength and ability. They marched particularly well, and with that indescribable freedom of gait which announced that they were ready-made soldiers, and obliged the beholder to acknowledge, that however appearances might be against them, they were likely to do more effective service in the mountain warfare than prettier men. In fact, sun, wind, rain and toil had already done their worst on their angular forms and

swarthy features, seasoning and attenuating the human animal till he had become all bone, nerve and muscle, with everything of mere graceful round-about fleshiness evaporated. The weather-beaten mountaineer which remained, only wanted a musket to make him a warrior, and such were these Arragonese. I only saw a single trait of constitutional sensitiveness manifested throughout their ranks, which amusingly contrasted with the reckless *fierté* displayed by the Algerine *pasados* reviewed at the opposite side of the Plaza. The latter in performing the evolution "order arms!" made Estella ring with the rattle of their musketry, while the prudent Arragonese, although they handled their pieces as lightly as hazel ox-goads, brought the butts to ground with noiseless ease,—evidently much less regardless of military effect than of the claims of their defenceless toes.

## CHAPTER V.

THE progress of Don Carlos and his ministers through the provinces, though highly gratifying to the inhabitants, awakening every where a spirit of activity, and naturally leading to the establishment of good order and discipline in all things liable to the royal *surveillance*, was yet rather unfavourable to the transaction of the proper business that appertained to each ministerial bureau, which was indeed rather too serious and extensive to be gone through by an ambulatory cabinet. Don Carlos, therefore, on his arrival at Estella on the 17th September, took up his residence together with Señor Erro and his secretaries, in the great square of St. John (*Plaza San Juan*), where they remained for the dispatch of business till the 30th, when the court again continued its progress and rode through Alava into Biscay. During its sojourn in Estella, I had the honour of being presented to the King

who received me with his usual urbanity, enquired with considerable interest into the opinions entertained by the various classes of society in England respecting the pending contest, expressed himself highly gratified at my arrival, and hoped that the example would be followed by numbers of my countrymen. He declared that it would give him the greatest pleasure to afford them every possible opportunity of judging for themselves of the state of the provinces and of estimating the feelings by which the population were animated. In conclusion he kindly assured me of his readiness to aid my researches in any department to which my attention had been directed, and requested to be informed of any thing which might be requisite to the progress of my enquiries or to the transmission of my correspondence. I experienced similar obliging assurances as well as real assistance from all the secretaries and officers of the court with whom I had at any time occasion to communicate, especially from Don Wenceslaus Maria de Sierra, *Secrétario de Estado del Despacho*, into whose office my business as well as inclination more frequently led me, for there I was always sure to find every aid and information which a traveller in my position could desire,—afforded with a degree of kindly attention, which doubly enhanced the favour, and

which perhaps a stranger only could fully appreciate. I own that in leaving London I had little expectation of finding the systematic habits or proceedings which characterize its men of business, in full operation amidst the wild mountains of Biscay and Navarre, but I feel it a matter of justice to all concerned to state that I was agreeably disappointed, and that all my letters, &c., could not have been forwarded or delivered with greater care or dispatch in any country than they were under the administration of Señor Sierra, within the circle of the Basque provinces and Navarre. I say *within* the provinces, for where they passed out of his jurisdiction beyond the Carlist frontier, and within the reach of Christino influence, it is too notorious that the latter did not scruple to employ the most felonious arts to compass not only the violation of public correspondence, but to perpetuate the falsification and publication of private; instructive instances of which fell under my own observation.

Whilst the court remained at Estella, I rode out daily through the surrounding country, visiting the several towns and villages which lay between it and the Christino frontiers to the extreme south of the Carlist possessions in Navarre. The various subjects of observation which my tour presented after crossing the French frontier, on the 9th September,

were each so well deserving of attention that I must endeavour to do them justice by separate descriptions.

At present I request the reader to view with me the face of the country, the culture and husbandry adopted on the route which I pursued through Guipuscoa and Navarre, and which I am assured present a fair average picture of the entire. The favourite article of cultivation throughout Guipuscoa is maize, not from any inability in the soil to produce good wheat and barley, for I have seen both in their barns and markets of excellent quality, but from the real superiority of maize in the fodder which it yields in addition to its crop of grain. Every day during the month of September, the peasants might be seen busied in its culture, carefully reaping and bearing off the tall succulent branches and flowering heads of the plants which had completed their functions, and leaving the main stems with their heavy handfuls of grain to ripen at leisure. This green forage is so important to the Basque farmer that he sows successive crops to yield it continuously, without the expectation of deriving any grain from the late sowings; and to such an extent does this culture prevail, that it appears to have excluded the raising of hay crops altogether. I looked pretty sharply in my rides over hill and valley, and though I saw



a few paddocks, some extensive river bottoms and rocky and woody pastures, where the obstacles to tillage obliged the owners to abandon the ground to the natural growth of grass, I did not see a single meadow. The maize grain is coarse, and employed almost exclusively in the feeding of cattle, pigs and poultry; it forms very heavy bread, and except in seasons of scarcity or in very secluded mountainous districts, the inhabitants do not consume it in this shape. It holds with them nearly the same rank that oats do with us. The soldier peasantry all receive their rations in wheaten bread, excellent in itself, but imperfectly raised in the baking, owing to the absence of good barm and the want of skill to supply it with an effective substitute. The ration loaves were made of coarse whole meal, the troops preferring it in that state; but others, prepared of flour alone in small flat or twisted rolls, were in my estimation so far superior to any bread I had ever tasted, that when I could obtain one to put in my pocket at the commencement of a day's ride, I felt quite at ease about my dinner. This fine wheat is chiefly grown in Navarre and Alava, and exchanged for the maize of Biscay and Guipuscoa; so that the Carlist provinces are quite independent of the rest of Spain for the main articles of subsistence for man and beast. The neat and careful style of farming

which pervades the entire country is delightful to the eye of an English traveller. Not a weed is to be seen amongst the crops, and not a perch of arable ground allowed to lie unoccupied.

The rich tract of alluvion extending between the towns of Irun and Fuenterrabia, (where the maize cultivation is seen in its greatest perfection,) has been already described. Beside the high road from Irun to Hernani and Tolosa, a few patches of turnips, wheat, and flax appear, and the country begins to be thinly sprinkled with vineyards. Proceeding southwardly from Tolosa to Villa Franca, the latter are more abundant and cover the sides of the stony hills in terraces, where the soil is supported by walls which mark the successive steps of laborious cultivation in the style that once hung the rocks of ancient Jerusalem with gardens, and which, at the present day enable the inhabitants of Lisbon to gather a rich harvest from the steep amphitheatre around their magnificent bay. On this road I also met, for the first time, a systematic mixture of orchards and tillage grounds in which well pruned apple trees stood at regular distances in fields of maize, both apparently in the highest condition. The Sierra de Andia, a series of high, steep, and well wooded mountains, (in which the oak, chesnut, ash, and encina, predominate,) separate Guipuscoa from the kingdom of Navarre, and present the

first indications of any material difference in the system of farming. The valleys which lie between this extensive range and the still more formidable rocks of the Amescoas, afford some rich pasturage; but the quantity of horned cattle, sheep and goats which I beheld browsing on a herbage that contrived to spring up amidst a surface white with the solid rock of a most obdurate flinty material, quite surprised me. The cows and oxen are driven to the lowlands in the winter, but the hardy sheep, goats, and pigs are often wintered in the mountains. The latter provide for themselves, and fatten on beech nuts, acorns, &c. which they find in abundance there. Extensive sheds are erected in each pasturage where they find refuge from the snow in severe seasons. As our party dismounted from their mules and horses to pick their steps over the last rocky spur of the Sierra that shut us out from the table-land of Navarre, a Carlist officer pointed out to me a range of these boothies which seemed to be little better than a disarranged portion of the inhospitable mountain. "There," said he "is one of the sheds in which we were often glad to find a shelter for the King, when Rodil and Valdes were pursuing him day and night on his first arrival."

The contrast which everything now presented (Sept. 1836) was very striking. There was not a

thought of warfare in one of these central mountains or valleys. The enemy was beaten out of sight, and the peasant-soldiers in passing to their quarters or bearing dispatches through the country, did not even trouble each other when they met with "*Quien vive ?*" All were friends within the frontiers, and so little troubled by "the pressure from without" that I found them actively engaged in works of internal improvement; amongst others making an excellent road for artillery through the Val de Andia from the Venta de Urbasa northward to the leading road from Pampeluna to Salvatiera and Vitoria which runs through the fertile valley of the Borunda. A long course of success had given the Carlists confidence, and changed the policy (which was once essential to their existence,) of dismantling forts and cutting off communications by the destruction of bridges, roads, &c. *On a changé tout cela !* Their system of *surveillance* in the interior was also relaxed in proportion to the security they felt. In my route through the entire of Guipuscoa and Navarre, from the northeastern point of Fuentarabia to Los Arcos in the southwest, I was only once stopped by any one in authority who demanded to know my business. This occurred in crossing the Sierra de Andia in the dark, where an officer of the Carlist Douane (one of whom is placed on each mountain track to regulate the transit duties

accruing to each province,) soon recognised a former comrade of his among the party, and insisted on our tasting a sample bottle of the wine of Navarre as a prelude to our journey thither. Navarre is indeed the vineyard of the Carlists, and they contend manfully with the stubborn hills for spots of earth to stick the fruitful twigs in. In riding amongst the vineyards near Estella, it was truly delightful to witness the results and to contemplate the energy and perseverance that led to them.

The rocks have first to be rolled hither and thither, and piled up out of the way; then the gritty subsoil has to be loosened by picks and forks; afterwards loads of manure have to be carried up flights of rocky stairs in double panniers formed of matting, resembling immense pairs of breeches tied at the knees, as they sit astride the poor mules. The task of unpaving the Strand in front of Somerset House and cultivating the under stratum, would be child's play compared to what I daily found the Navarrese cheerfully accomplishing, and beating off an enemy into the bargain. Around Estella the wheat and barley grounds spread widely also, and the olive cultivation begins. The fruit is small compared with what is to be found in the south of Spain and Portugal, but it is not for want of industry and attention. Corn, wine and oil culture are to be seen for miles about the town

lying in patches at all elevations on the steep sides of the immense horseshoe range of the Amescoas, which bounds the horizon in nearly twenty points of the compass, forming with the tracts of native heath, furze and fern, a garment of as many colours as are painted in Jacob's coat;—the summit, composed of one mass of naked perpendicular rock (on which Valdes' army marched for two days and a night before they could reach a safe road to descend), presenting a whimsical resemblance to a standing collar. The wheat fallows beneath are beautifully clean, all root weeds being carefully hoed up by hand and burned in heaps on the field. In short, the interior presents an admirable picture of order, peace and comfort, far beyond what I had been taught to give the people of any part of Spain credit for. The frontier presents a very different picture.

## CHAPTER VI.

The sojourn of Don Carlos and his court at Estella afforded me an opportunity of witnessing on the southern frontier some of the effects of the warfare, from which the energy of the Carlists had happily freed the greater part of Navarre. Accompanied by a couple of officers I rode over the scene of the most recent conflict, which approached within a mile of the town,—heard the details from numbers who were active participators on the 13th and 14th instant, and was thereby enabled to form a tolerably just estimate of the value the troops upon both sides set on themselves, and the style in which they carried on the war at the moment. The Christinos, on the morning of the 13th September, advanced from three points of their “circle of investiture,” as they term it, in as many columns, each taking a direction which would re-unite the entire at Estella. I was assured that their numbers

amounted altogether to 15,000 foot, 1,000 horse and twenty-two pieces of cannon led by Irribarren and Oraa. One column advanced from Laraga, plundering the villages in its route ; in this column were about 2,000 of the Algerine Legion drawn from cantonments around Pampeluna, who have always evinced a particular expertness in this branch of warfare. The central column came onward from Lerin, pillaging the villages of Dicastillo, Oteiza and Luguia, while the third or western column marched out of Lodosa through Mendavia, rifling the inhabitants of Cogullo, Los Arcos and Arraniz. Detachments from the three columns also effectually stripped the towns and villages of Murens, Morentin, Allo and Arellano of any moveable of value which they could lay their hands on ; plate, linen, cloth, leather, shop goods of all kinds, horses, mules, cattle, sheep, pigs and goats ; they burned six houses (two in Murens, two in Arellano, and one near the fort of San Gregorio). They attacked this latter place at noon with all their cannon, four pound field pieces and howitzers ; but though only defended by a single wall, and without artillery, they could not make the least impression on it ; partly owing to its commanding position on the summit of a hill, and partly owing to the very bad engineering of the Christino artillerymen, which is indeed notorious. Here the column from Lodosa



was met and boldly attacked by Don Pablo Sanz, who arrived with about 3,000 men only, and without any cannon drove them back to Los Arcos at six in the evening in a most disgraceful rout. Lieutenant Adolphe D'Argy who led a company of the Carlist Foreign Legion only fifty-four in number, charged at the point of the bayonet 1,500 Spanish Christinos of this column, and chased them during an hour and a quarter, till he had driven them four miles from San Gregorio. The two Foreign Legions did not meet in this affair, as those in the service of Don Carlos were in the west of the battle, and Lebeau's Algerines were on the east. On the second day, the united forces of the three Christino columns drove back the trifling force with which Pablo Sanz had succeeded in checking their western wing, and advanced as far as the little wood on the brow of the hill which overhangs the convent of Yrache, and looks down into Estella. By this time Don Francis Garcia had come up with a reinforcement of 1,500 Carlists; so the Christinos abandoned all idea of penetrating further, (though their arrangement evidently contemplated the plunder of Estella also), and retreated to their lines in all haste with what booty they had already collected;—leaving about 600 men *hors de combat*: of these, sixty were prisoners. The Carlists, upon their side, suffered a gross

loss of about 200 ; of which they counted forty-one killed and thirty-seven prisoners.

The country near Oteiza presented the first indications of the neighbourhood of an enemy. Fallow fields bearing thick crops of thistles, struck the eye, and presented matter for melancholy reflection. The farmer had fled the horrors of civil warfare, or more likely had already fallen in the strife. But these were exceptions, for several fields around Oteiza were well filled with ripening maize or vines which still evinced the greatest care, for up to the day of the Christino foray, the husbandman had indulged the hope of reaping the reward of his toil. That town had been entered on the first day, the 13th, by the centre column from Lerin, the fort of which lay full in view only two leagues off, in a very strong position on the top of a conical hill. Just before we rode into the village, a report of fresh movements of the enemy had arrived. Lebeau's Algerine Legion were moving westward across the country from Larraga to Sesma and Calahorra, ready on the one hand to oppose the entry of Gomez into Navarre ; while on the other they again menaced Los Arcos and the country beyond, preparing, it was said, to come with horses and mules arrayed with sacks, paniers, &c., to carry off grain, crops and whatever they had not means or leisure to convey to their lines on the previous inroad. The inhabitants

of Oteiza were therefore busy in removing towards Estella all that the Christinos had left, and we saw nobody except a few women, a travelling monk, and two or three soldiers of the *Partida* keeping watch from the brow of the hill over the bare and neglected tract of country that lay between them and Lerin. We first stopped at the house of the *Fisico*, a man of great consideration in a Spanish village, where he is physician, surgeon and apothecary, and in which his house is frequently the very best. As a description of one may suffice for all, I shall select his. Not a chair, table, bed, plate, knife or napkin was left. The Christinos had emptied the very washing-tubs, and the only piece of soft goods they spared was a skein of thread, wet in the process of bleaching; this they tangled and threw away. They broke the doors and window-irons, ripped up door cases and old walls in search of hidden cash or plate, burned all the wooden furniture they did not think proper to incumber themselves with, threw the discarded pots and pans into the draw-well in the barn, spilled the medicine and broke the bottles;—in short, they did not leave a pill box in the house. They then began to set fire to the village, but were interrupted by Pablo Sanz and F. Garcia before they quite consumed the second house. All the inhabitants had fled, except a farmer's wife who

was near her confinement,—too ill to be removed, and who died next day of the effects of their brutal violence. The doctor was at Estella during our visit, but his lady received us with true Spanish spirit and hospitality ; she was not in the least cast down or put out of her way, and showed us round the Christino “improvements” in her abode, with more of fortitude and practical philosophy than I could have supposed possible. She did not want our pity, but she could well appreciate our sympathy in her indignation ; and having made us sit down on three chairs, (brought from a village that lay out of the line of march on the 13th and 14th) she prepared some chocolate for us, laughing at the absence of her own cups, mill, toasting fork and all the aids of good cookery, while every tone and gesture said plainly enough, “I shall see a day for all this !” We departed, rendering “*muchas gracias*” to the Señora, admiring her happy elasticity of mind, and envying the doctor notwithstanding his empty house. A frontier village in a civil war in Spain is an excellent school for housekeepers. A lady there is afforded so many opportunities of practising to be “mistress of herself though China fall,” that at last she may be fairly pronounced “finished.”

Don Carlos visited the wounded the same day at the convent of Yrache, and highly gratified the brave fellows by his generous sympathy and

the bounty he dispensed. He visited every department accompanied by the Infant Don Sebastian, General Uranga, the Vicar-General Don Echavarria, Colonel Don Francis Merry and Don ——— Villavicensio his chamberlains, and the captain of the Royal Guard, Ochao. An affecting scene took place just then. A wounded grenadier died in the arms of his wife who had arrived to visit him, and the poor woman was inconsolable. Don Carlos endeavoured to comfort her by an additional present of ten dollars. The wounded men said if they could only see the King every day they should soon get well.

In this convent, which had been converted into an hospital for the frontier, I saw all the wounded comfortably provided with separate beds and assiduously attended by the Sisters of Charity attached to the convent. There were 120 poor fellows conveyed hither after the action, seven so severely wounded that they died soon after, but certainly not for want of good care, for I never saw soldiers in England better provided for, and they expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with their surgeon and his treatment. They occupied the entire first and second floor of the great quadrangle, built around a fountain which was perpetually playing in the centre. Not a man lay on the ground floor. Almost every one that we spoke to was wounded in

the legs or thighs! One miserable fellow formed a singular exception. He was shot through the cheeks for the third time; yet such is the persevering spirit that animates all ranks, I should not be surprised to learn that, on getting well again, he had ventured into a fourth battle, although he will undoubtedly have his peseta (10d.) a day for life. These pensions Don Carlos indiscriminately allows for wounds and distinguished bravery.

I saw an Englishman in the hospital, who assured me that he was suffering violently from the rheumatism, although I never saw a man who looked in better health! He said that he had been brought to St. Sebastian as servant to Captain — who, when he got him there, made him serve in the ranks, and also gave him no wages. In gratitude, he galloped off with the captain's horse to the Carlists, and was placed as a Lancer in the Foreign Legion until two Polacks of the same company took it into their heads to gallop off to the Christians, when he was dismounted lest he should follow their example. He complained grievously of this mistrust, still more of some arrears of pay which were due to him, declared his intention of requesting his passport as soon as he was able to walk homewards through France, and his conviction of the propriety of allowing the Spaniards on both sides to fight it out without his assistance. Mean-

time, I have no doubt that he found the rheumatism very convenient and salutary. I saw another patient of a different stamp, who lay desperately cut up and unable to move a limb, but whose dark eyes glowed like coals of fire, while he related how he who had been a serjeant for ten years in the French army had, on joining the Carlists, for want of his papers, been offered the rank of corporal. "*Mon Dieu ! Non ! Tout ou rien !*" He had rather be a private again ! In fact he was serving as such when he was wounded.

The Basque and Navarrese women appear to make excellent nurses. No false notions of delicacy interfere with their indispensable services: they know that the surgeon must amputate legs and arms—that he wants their assistance, and they render it cheerfully. Not knowing that they have nerves, they seldom faint, and the wounded are attended all the better for their *hardiesse*. The Sisters of Mercy and other *monjas*, whose rules permit them to visit and attend the sick, devote themselves to the task with an earnestness and efficacy which cannot be sufficiently admired. Many of these are educated and highly intelligent. When they take charge of an hospital, everything is sure to prosper. Their conscientious regularity and benevolent attention, effect, perhaps, more for their patients, than greater skill seconded by mere merce-

nary attendance can accomplish in England. Surgeon, apothecary and patient are all confident in the watchful care of the Sister of Mercy. She administers the cup of hope with one hand, and that of resignation with the other. She brings to the sufferer's pillow every attainable earthly comfort and spiritual consolation; and in short, if a cure be possible, effects it. These excellent women carefully attended the hospital at Yrache, and were of incalculable benefit to the sufferers in the action of the 13th September, before mentioned; but as day broke on the morning of the 14th, they found that the enemy was in force descending the heights; that a fresh combat was in progress at their undefended gates, and that their friends were giving way before them. The Carlist soldiers were at that moment carrying three wounded comrades to the hospital, but the Lancers of the enemy charging down in numbers, obliged them to fly and leave them on the spot, where they were deliberately cut to pieces by the Christino cavalry. The Carlists in the hospital saw this horrid butchery going on almost under their windows, and all who could leave their beds, rushed down to escape by a postern, expecting similar treatment every moment at the hands of the ferocious victors. The Sisters of Mercy still stood by the beds of the helpless and dying, calmly awaiting their fate,—perhaps to be



burned alive with them, for the Christinos, wherever they passed during the foray were consuming all the Carlist property they had not time to plunder and carry off, and did not spare the houses that held it. Fortunately the Carlist generals, Francis Garcia and Pablo Sanz hastening up at the moment with reinforcements, preserved the hospital and all its inmates from the impending destruction. My visit occurred only six days afterwards, when I was a pleased spectator of the quiet but ceaseless devotion of the good sisters, and the attention, order and neatness which their watchful kindness ensured throughout the establishment where 120 poor fellows lay enduring every variety of pain. The gratitude and confidence of the sufferers were not less obvious and delightful, and I left the convent with the conviction that civil war had not altogether extinguished Christian charity in that "red land." Man was indeed doing his utmost to bring a hell upon earth; but there were yet lingering on it spirits of a finer, purer, nobler order, whose example and influence still preserved a portion of the blessings designed for it by heaven.

## CHAPTER VII.

It fully appeared from the movements of the Christinos, both on the northern and southern frontiers, that their policy was confined to plunder and devastation; hopeless as they were of penetrating with any other effect into the territory occupied by the Carlists. On the same day they issued from their southern lines, a sortie for a similar purpose was made from St. Sebastian, and General Evans had the honour of enacting "war to the cottage" and burning a few barns under the protection of the fort. During the cannonade I was riding along the road from Irun to Hernani, where I happened to meet an illustration of the *morale* of the force with which Evans was at that moment endeavouring to dispense the blessings of peace and good order in Spain, and associated as the cannonade was with the rencontre, I think I shall never forget them. A Guipuscoan foot soldier marched along, escorting

an ugly unshaven fellow without coat, waistcoat, hat or shoes, ragged and dirty beyond anything to be seen in Spain, but which, from my experience of similar spectacles in droves on the high roads of France, I recognized at once to be a deserter from the Westminster Legion. He told me that he was a native of Cork, and had been serving in St. Sebastian under Colonel Shaw, but not liking the treatment he received, he came away. But how he came away, or what he had done with his arms, "he disremembered quite." All he knew was that he had been near starving, had sold his jacket to obtain bread, before the soldier took charge of him, he supposed that by-and-by he would soon be brought safely back to St. Sebastian, and further, he wanted some tobacco! The poor wretch actually did not know into whose hands he had fallen, and, if the Basques could have understood him, would have effectually condemned himself. I gave him the best advice I could think of, and a franc for tobacco to help him to remember it, viz. when he reached Irun, to request Señor García to send him home to England again through France with the rest of his comrades, and to say as little as possible about his expectations of returning to St. Sebastian.

From the exertions of the Christinos on the southern frontier to help themselves, it was easy to

gather that they had little hope of receiving any from Madrid in the autumnal campaign. A fortnight previous, they had levied a contribution of 7,000 dollars on the town of Mendigorria, in which they kept a fort garrisoned by four companies of 100 men each. These prudent warriors used to shut themselves up very safely in their citadel every night, whilst the Carlists, who will run a little risk for good wine, entered the town in the dark in parties of a dozen to bring it as rations, leaving only in return the usual order and receipt of the Secretary of War in the name of Don Carlos. They felt that it would be quite an insult to the cause to think of paying money for it.

On the 25th of September, I joined a party to visit Ciraoqui and Mañeru, and the new frontier fort of Santa Barbara, erected to command the road from Mendigorria and Puente la Reyna to Estella, on a hill which overlooks the Christino lines for miles around. We rode along the fine old Roman road through hills on which not a plant except the vine and olive were to be seen, (the harsh gravelly soil being absolutely bare of grass,) till we came to Ciraoqui, a large village in a strong position, on the top of a hill, garrisoned by the Arragonese before mentioned. Further on we found 150 of the Foreign Legion under the command of General Zarategui. Here French, Germans, Italians, and

Portuguese mingled in striking contrasts. Light eyes and fair hair predominated. The majority were of grenadier stature, and all were characterised by an air of military experience—half ferocity, half *nonchalance*,—indicating their capabilities not only in the field but in the *bivouac*, and the necessity of keeping up a very strict discipline to preserve in full efficiency all their latent destructiveness till it could be let loose on the Christino battalions. I was assured that when fairly before the enemy no men behaved more bravely. We next proceeded up the hill to the fort, consisting of a large stone house of a single story and a sleeping loft in the tiled roof, surrounded by a wall pierced with loop holes, and a fosse. Masons were completing an additional bastion at the corner overlooking Puerta la Reyna, and a platform for cannon on the spur of the mountain which faced Mendigorria. It is an important station, and with a twenty-four pounder mounted on that eminence could command not only the valley of the river Arga, between those two towns, but a new fort which the Christinos were erecting opposite on the western bank, but about 300 feet lower. Besides overlooking the two places before mentioned, it affords a view of a dozen others in the hands of the Christinos, including Artajona, Lerin, and a corner of Larraga which lies almost hidden by an adjacent hill. We saw just under us the

place where the lamented Captain Reyna was killed by a sortie from Puerta la Reyna, while working the cannon he had himself, unaided, cast among the hills with what brass and copper pots and kettles he could collect, at a time when Zumalacarregui had not a single piece of ordnance, and had no money to purchase any. The Christinos took care not to pass Santa Barbara a few days previously when they crossed the Arga to pillage the Carlist frontier adjoining.

Returning towards Estella by moonlight, we passed the Arragonese sentinel at Ciraoqui, doing duty in his own fine head of hair instead of a *boyna*; but he did not mind it—" *Hace un tiempo hermoso !*" said he in explanation—"The weather is so very fine!" We met a battalion of the guides of Navarre further on, taking the road to the frontier, accompanied by General Francis Garcia and his staff, bent on an expedition across the Arga to raise recruits, and levy retributive contributions in Artajona. The battalion was marching in double file along the road, one at each side, for the benefit of the excellent stone pathways, singing merrily to the favourite Navarrese air whatever words they pleased. Every province has an air of its own, and as each of them ends with a kind of Yodolen chorus, the singers have little difficulty in adapting any words, foolish or witty, that may occur at the

moment;—some extemporise very cleverly. One fellow sang to his guitar, another had a triangle, and they strummed and jingled with great good will, while every man within hearing sang in chorus or laughed at his fellow's joke,—his coat hanging on his arm or on his musket, as if he felt the bright moonlight too sultry. The peals of song and laughter were, however, drowned the moment they passed, by the chirping of millions of locusts and grasshoppers in the vines around. They outsang any day-song of birds I ever heard in the fields or woods of England. Peasants and their wives riding double, followed, joining in the chorus. As I looked back, I could hardly believe that these revellers were marching on a night attack. They could scarcely have been more careless if going to waltz in the Plaza Real under the balcony of Don Carlos, with the patriotic Señoritas of the villa. But all was safe, for they were within their own lines where every soul was enthusiastically Carlist. For myself, I rode through the midst of the merry battalion with greater ease than ever I made my way through a British regiment in either street or highway. There was no sulkiness, or muttering of insult, or ferocious jostling of my puzzled mule, while she threaded her way through the armed crowd; although her rider's only sign of nationality was the blue *boyna* he wore. Indeed I could not

have anticipated the extent of the active as well as passive politeness I experienced in my tour; although from the quantity of prudential advice transmitted to me by kind friends relative to a "thousand and one" precautions indispensable to be adopted, I found that many people in England and France considered the country at the other side of the Pyrenees as rather a dangerous part of the world. Now this is a great mistake, as far as I had an opportunity of penetrating and observing; and ere I proceed farther in my narrative, I wish to set the sceptical reader's mind at rest on that point.

During the four months which I spent in Navarre, Alava, Biscay, and Guipuscoa, I never met with the slightest insult or injury, though quite unarmed, frequently travelling alone, and not particularly on my guard either by night or day against being robbed and eaten, although I heard some very nervous tales of wolves and bears as ferocious as Mina and Rodil, and of a band of forty robbers who had made hundreds stand and deliver in the mountains of Guipuscoa, caring neither for Carlos or Christina; with a full, true, and particular account of how the people had hunted and taken them all just before I arrived; and how they had mercifully beaten the forty thieves to death with sticks; and how the fair and false captain of the brigands was discovered to be a lady; and how



she pleaded that she was no better than she should be ; and how she was thereby saved from summary execution and committed to prison to abide her time,—whence I suppose the story will not bring her forth for nine years to come ; all for the edification of travellers ! Speaking merely from my own experience, I can say that an Englishman may travel very safely and pleasantly through the Basque Provinces and Navarre, provided he keep his eyes and ears open and his mouth shut, and does not impertinently set himself up to contradict the popular opinion that Englishmen are all drunkards, who will sell their shirts, shoes or jackets for a bottle of wine ; and that English women will sell their children for a real ( $2\frac{3}{4}d.$ ) a piece, or the equivalent thereof, in *aguardiente*. The higher classes of Carlists who have travelled and seen other samples of *Ingleses* than those let loose upon the coast at Bilboa, St. Sebastian and Passages, take a somewhat different view of our national character, and, ascending to the best informed, Don Carlos declares that nothing would please him more than to see English gentlemen freely travelling through the country and judging for themselves if the people wished to be ruled by Maria Christina and Mendizabal, and if there be the slightest chance of either or both (with Lord Palmerston to aid) compelling them to do what they do not like. How-

ever, I should not recommend any of our speculative statesmen, political economists, theoretic legislators, or abstract geniuses of any class, to venture on a Basque peregrination. A traveller must habitually have an eye to the practical to get on at all comfortably there. I crossed the frontier with an eye to the picturesque and an ear to Fuentarabian echoes, reflecting on the consequences of the change in the Spanish law of succession, Lord Palmerston's non-intervention hoax, and such like *mal à propos* matters; but long before I re-crossed the Bidassoa I had learned to become alive to the present instead of the absent—to look to my dinner and my saddle bags, my mule and her shoes, and to stand by to pledge her (Saxon style) while she fed. As to drinking, that was her own affair, and not being a Legionite *bagage* she never made a beast of herself. The traveller will find the views from the tops of the mountains truly magnificent. He will also very probably discover that he has gained a splendid appetite by the ascent, without any likelihood of gratifying it in such ethereal regions, unless he discovers something to the purpose in his own knapsack. He will also find very speedily that there is but one dinner hour in every *posada*, which, like a law of the Medes and Persians, is, when once passed, irrevocable. The greatest variation of latitude in this meridian (for

it cannot properly be called dinner) is from twelve till one o'clock, whatever be the longitude of the place, so that the picturesque and magnificent had better always be reserved for a *dessert*. As to dangers, there are really none, if, as I said before, the tourist will only keep his ears and eyes open. But an example is worth a column of advice.

To the south-east of Estella an extraordinary sharp splintery ridge of rock rises in pinnacles, one of which, overhanging the town, is surmounted by an iron crucifix about sixteen feet high, ornamented with scroll-work and visible at a considerable distance. It was placed there to commemorate the crowning victory gained by the ancient Christian Knights of Navarre over the Moors who had built a fortress on the very spot, the ruins of which are still to be seen. Of course I climbed up to examine it and enjoy a view of the Amescos and the adjoining country, but scarcely had I steadied myself with the aid of the cross (passing my arms round it, and holding on against the efforts of the treacherous pinnacle-squalls whilst adjusting my telescope) when I heard a dozen voices below, shouting out, "*Abajo! Abajo!*" (Down! Down!) and looking towards the base of the cliff, I beheld the guards at the nearest city gate pointing about a dozen muskets at me, their bright barrels flashing in most undesirable convergency *into* my

eye, which fortunately was wide awake. I felt that I was doing something wrong (*i. e.* dangerous) up there, so I instantly squatted out of sight on a little tabular space at the foot of the cross, and contented myself with a panoramic view, the foreground of which was rather distant and did not include the city gate. I found on my descent, that I had been unconsciously acting the forbidden part of a Christino telegraphic signal (perhaps inviting them to attack Estella for what I knew,) and that the guard despairing of "making me sensible" (as they say in Ireland) by anything they could utter at such a distance, were on the point of signalizing my descent by what a military friend calls "a platonic fusillade." While the Christinos held Estella, these rocks were the cause of much annoyance to them. The Carlist marksmen were always up there, firing into the city, and daily picking off men on duty at the gates or on parade in the squares. Before a column could march, the morning would be lost dislodging the pestiferous *partida* from the ledge that overhung the road; if the captors abandoned it at night, there was every probability of the Carlist peasantry repeating the dose next morning. If the Christinos left a company outside the walls to keep possession of the place, there was a tolerable cer-

tainty of half of them being shot before sunrise, and the other half after it.

They got out of the difficulty by abandoning Estella and the Rock of the Moor together, and travellers will act wisely in foregoing the appearance of anything like an attempt to take possession of either. *A propos* of musket barrels, I was formerly a strong advocate of the English practice of browning, as peculiarly advantageous in "the surprising system" of mountain and forest warfare which the Carlists carry on; (a march having frequently been discovered at nine miles' distance by the reflection of their bright surfaces), but since my pilgrimage to the foot of the cross of Estella I have become an altered man, and made it a point to express my admiration of the brilliant effect of the polished barrel. I sincerely hope no meddling reformer will attempt an alteration in this respect, for I owe my life on another occasion to the half-quarter-minute's preparation which the flash of a barrel afforded me one night in Durango ere the flash of the pan followed to settle my account, and save me the trouble of taking any further precautions. As the incident is highly illustrative, I shall take the liberty of relating it here, and then resume my narrative with more regard to the order of events. I was going about two hours after dark to see a

friend at the posada *Agapita*, one evening in October just before we set out with Villa Real for the siege of Bilbao. Hitherto the town had been exceedingly tranquil. I had never heard an angry word in house or street, except what a poor simpleton, who fancied himself an *Alcalde*, used to bestow on the little mischievous boys who defied his authority all for fun. There was not previously a guard to be seen, except at the palace door,—the state drawing-room and in the street on Sundays and festival days, to accompany the King thence to church and back again. But now the bustle of preparation was heard, cannons, ammunition and artillery waggons from Oñate, rattled through the market place, bound for the siege, or halted for the night with their guards in any of the public buildings that could accommodate them. However, not a tipsy or disorderly man was visible, and nothing that I could see indicated the necessity of taking any particular precaution. The streets were very quiet about the hour I sallied from my lodging in *Goien Calle*, and I heard nothing stirring till a cross street brought me within view of the dim lamp which marks the corner of the *Casa de Villa*, when, for the first time in the Basque provinces, I heard the voice of somebody quarrelling and scolding. "Let them fight it out between themselves," thought I, as I approached

the spot where somebody was, like Isaac Shove—grumbling and grunting in his gizzard audibly.

“That fellow’s swearing in Basquense, and I could do no good by intermeddling in the row. No, no!—Let them fight it out!—

They who in quarrels interpose,  
May often wipe a bloody nose.—

“*Demonio! hombre! porque esto con un amigo?*” was my exclamation as I came opposite the lamp, and caught a glimpse of a sentinel taking aim at me with his bayonet to my breast. “*Demonio usted!*” retorted he, lowering his piece to a position in which I saw with delight that he was only going to run me through. “Why the devil didn’t you reply to all my challenges? I gave you warning a street’s length off, and here you come to be shot as if you had not ears to hear *Quien vive?*” I assuaged the fellow’s wrath by a candid confession of my stupidity—it being the first time I was ever challenged, &c., and finding that I was not a practical joker, he kindly wished me “*passa usted buen!*” Arriving at my friend’s lodging, I was seriously assured that I had a miraculous escape, and that the man ought to have shot, or stabbed me at least, for approaching him without speaking. Ever afterwards I made it a point whenever I heard anything like a quarrelsome interrogation by night or day—whether in street, field, camp, or battery—to

sing out in the first place, "*España !*" If the scolding continued, I chimed in with "*Voluntario !*"—(being an answer to the supposed question, "*Que regimiento ?*") ; and if that did not satisfy my invisible interrogators, I responded for the third and last time at the top of my voice, "*Carlos Quinto !*" a phrase, like "Open sesame," of magical import, which I would advise all travellers to recollect who (unlike Hassan Baba) would return from their travels to describe the wonders they encounter. As to a passport, that will be the least of a traveller's troubles in the dominions of Don Carlos : all are friends within the frontier. I was only once requested to show mine on my travels in the interior, and that was on the retreat from Bilboa, when it was very properly judged to be a point of some importance to ascertain *who* was entering Durango. The difficulties are to leave France, and to enter it again. The traveller will, in all probability not have any particular reason to congratulate himself on his return to the "land of liberty and politeness" at Behovia. He will most likely find himself waited on by two or three very civil gentlemen in cocked-hats, swords, yellow-belts and white shoulder knots, who will sit in his chamber listening to his conversation and accompany him if he leaves it for a moment, wherever he may go—will sup at his expense, and mount guard



at his bed-room door. Next morning he will be conducted in state to Bayonne, (the gentlemen with yellow belts and white shoulder-knots sitting on the coach box, also at his expense,) in the view of an admiring population; and there it just depends on the good pleasure of Monsieur le Sou-Prefect, to allow him to stay twenty-four hours to settle his affairs, or arrange his instant departure in the *mal-poste* or *diligence* for Calais with the additional pleasure of enjoying a similar guard of honour all the way. In this latter case, it will be time for him to stop paying, and then perhaps they may "abandon him to the care of Providence."

But to continue the moonlight march of General Francis Garcia, with his *Guias de Navarra*. Soon after they had passed us, they were joined by the Foreign Legion at Mañeru, and thus strengthened, Garcia continued his route to the Christino town of Artajona, crossing the Arga and the enemy's lines by the bridge of Mendigorria, and reaching his destination without any serious opposition. There he was speedily joined by forty recruits, many of whom it appears were waiting for his safe-conduct to leave the Christino lines and pass the forts and guards with their arms, without incurring needless personal risk, or, what these poor fellows think much more of, exposing their families to the vengeful reaction of the Christino authorities.

who look very sharply after the connections of patriotic emigrants across the Carlist frontier, and spitefully put their names at the head of all lists for contributions. In the present instance the recruits and their friends had the excuse of a little gentle force to collect and bring them within the Carlist lines; and the thing thus being clearly inevitable and according to the etiquette of civil war, the Christino commandants rested content with their ill luck. The expedition returned the same night to Mañeru and Ciraoqui, bringing with them also a supply for the new levies, in the shape of 300 arobas of wheat (about seventy-five hundred weight), and 150 cantaras of wine (about 320 gallons). A slight skirmish occurred in recrossing the Rio Arga, in which one Carlist soldier was shot, and two Christinos taken prisoners. The new fort on the hill above Mañeru (Santa Barbara) is admirably placed in command of the only road from Mendigorria and Puente la Reyna, so as effectually to check a pursuit from thence; but the Christinos wisely attempted none.

The administration of Don Carlos was at this period (September,) particularly energetic in getting up the sinews of war, well knowing how much depended on the healthful condition of the military chest; and the Junta of Navarre decreed the payment of a contribution of 10,000 dollars by the

town of Estella as a preliminary. This, like all the other contributions of Navarre and the Basque provinces, was fully understood to be only a loan, to be repaid when Don Carlos arrived at Madrid. They have, I understood, been paid cheerfully so far; and as the first fruits of the latter, the army received a month's pay; being several then in arrear. The same Junta also proposed the enactment of a financial measure to extend over the villages of their great valley, (the Merindad of Estella, about a third part of the kingdom of Navarre,) designed to facilitate the collection of future contributions according to a scale of the possessions of each proprietor. A main feature of this arrangement was, that previous to the disposal of any cattle or horses, the owner should give notice to government and obtain leave to sell, subject to certain claims for the service of the state. This financial regulation the peasantry strongly objected to. In the first place they said it was contrary to their old customs, (and they have a special dislike to new-fangled ways):—in the next, that there was no occasion for the innovation, they having always willingly contributed to the utmost of their ability whenever they were directly applied to (and in fact, having much more ground under cultivation to meet the daily demand for 40,000 rations than they would trouble themselves with the tillage of in

time of peace):—thirdly, that it would be virtually giving up the control of their property and the management of their fields into the hands of the King, contrary to the individual privileges of the Navarrese time out of mind:—and fourthly, (the strongest of any), “they don’t like it, and won’t have it!” They therefore, summoned a council (in fact appointed a committee) to support their views and to present a respectful memorial to the King explanatory of their rights and privileges, which I understand received grave and gracious consideration at the hands of his Majesty and his Minister, Señor Erro. Lord Palmerston and his unfortunate friends at St. Sebastian really formed very erroneous notions of the capabilities of these peasantry to understand their own affairs and defend their own fields and flocks. As far as I could see, they were fully as intelligent, as free, and as comfortable as the peasantry of England, and perhaps “something more.” It is probable they do not set so high a value on their lives, for they expose them without hesitation where either their own independence or their King’s hereditary rights were invaded; and fathers and mothers still cheerfully enrolled their younger sons on the list of *voluntarios* as claimants for the first idle muskets, notwithstanding the elder had already fallen in the same cause. But there are bounds to the most heroic sacrifices. The

most highly-professing "life and fortune men" of Old England grumble at the taxes. Byron showed a very exact knowledge of human nature in his warning advice to Kings and Ministers, which holds quite as good in the meridian of Estella as of Missolonghi—

"Kill a man's family and he may mock it,—  
But keep your hands out of his breeches pocket!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

DON Carlos and his court departed from Estella on Friday the 30th of September, and continued his tour northward to Biscay, visiting every town and village on his way, and inspecting the various public works in progress. He was accompanied by the Infante Don Sebastian, together with Count D'Orga, colonel of cavalry, and the Count de Sirat, both *grandees* of the first class who arrived recently at Estella and were appointed chamberlains to the King. Señor Toledo, a son of the Duke d'Infantado, and Lieutenant-colonel of cavalry also arrived and joined the escort. Anxious to become more fully acquainted with the feelings of the people towards Don Carlos, I availed myself of the opportunity of personal observation afforded me by this tour, and having strapped my portmanteau on a friend's *bagage*, I mounted a fine mule which I had just purchased in Estella and joined the royal cavalcade

on the road to the far-famed Basilica of San Gregorio, founded on the summit of a commanding hill in commemoration of the miraculous deliverance of Spain (through his intercession) from a plague of locusts—the story of which is painted at large on the walls of the elegant little church.

The equinox had passed over very calmly with two or three nights of quiet meteoric lightning and a couple of showers that seemed to empty the sky ; but when we set forth, the sun and the earth were just as torrid as ever. The gardens around the town were drinking up the water of irrigation without wasting a drop, and the stubble in the wheat fields was blazing industriously with little or no help from the peasants, whose chief care seemed to be that the fire should not reach their neighbours' crops. The air, earth, and trees were alive with the hum and glitter of insects. The mosquitoes were busy in their vocation, making " war to the lancet " on every body's siesta : the great dragon-flies were darting to and fro on duty as mosquito hawks, preserving the balance of power on this constitutional question : the fat Capuchin locusts were rattling their shoulder-blades against their hoods and making an inconceivable racket ; their cousins the grasshoppers were fluttering about, twice as long and strong and lively as their brethren of England, sporting elegant blue-speckled wing-fans, and

endeavouring to persuade the traveller that they were butterflies; but, after a scamper of three or four yards were glad to settle again. The little lizards in brown, green and gold, lay basking on the stones, speculating on the seizure of some ant or lady-cow, till our shadows scared them into their crevices. The hornets whizzed angrily past, us chasing wasps or house-flies, and all who had ever felt the annoyance of either, wished them God-speed. The latter were so pestiferous at Estella, that before I could sit down to write, I was obliged to chase every one out of the room and shut them out. There are two species, both apparently resembling the British house-fly, but one is provided with lancets that cut as deep as those of our red horse-fly. Legions of bees were abroad. The partridges challenged their rivals among the vineyards in the valleys, each exulting over the merits of his crop of grapes and grasshoppers. But in truth, the latter have no grass to hop on near Estella. Rocks and red earth only strike the eye amongst the olive and vineyards, and an extensive mountainous tract on the west, extending to Yrache and Villatuerta, will not grow either. It is a mass of coarse gypsum, interstratified with rock salt, which, dissolving with every shower, the mountain is gradually crumbling down into the Rivers Ega and Zudaire which flow round the town at its base. On



the saline soil at the accessible side of this mountain, wheat and maize only are found to thrive. Advancing N. and N.W. from Estella the wine and olive culture gradually give way to that of corn, and the wheat, oats, and barley stubbles far surpass in extent, the ground under maize. Proceeding northward through the province of Alava, the proportion of wheat is still larger, the oriental millet appears, the olive disappears, and the vine is only seen in favoured spots where the mountains recede till they leave free space for sun and air to act and induce the almost arid soil it requires. But the valleys of the Basque provinces are in general much narrower than those of Navarre, and the northern winds that sweep over the Bay of Biscay clothe the rocky tops of their mountains with chilly mists early in autumn, under which the grape will grow indeed, but is rarely matured. The mountaineer, stunted in his wine and oil, redoubles his activity to obtain such a harvest as will procure him both in exchange. The patient industry with which he adapts the crop to the soil and the climate, is truly admirable and ensures its just reward. Armed with his digging forks and hoe, he ascends the steep mountain side to cultivate heights where oxen could find no footing, and ploughs would be useless; resigning his task only at the line where the soil ceases and the rock begins. The hardy

ilex and encina here contrive to find standing-room and a congenial climate, and where the mountain is not of most obdurate impassibility, girdle it round with a forest.

On the road, we learned that the long talked-of expedition to Arragon under Pablo Sanz and Joaquin Elio had received a new destination consequent on some unexpected Christino movements in that province, and that Villa Real had a few days before directed it to the Asturias. Thither they had accordingly gone with four battalions of infantry and two squadrons of cavalry, marching on Oviedo. To counteract this new movement 250 of the Auxiliary Legion at St. Sebastian had been dispatched to Gihon; leaving the garrison of the former so much weakened as to encourage Guibaldes' attack on the 1st of October<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Not being before St. Sebastian during this affair, I shall not attempt to describe it. However, the following *morceau* from the pen of an officer of the Carlist Artillery, Captain Saave, is too characteristic to be withheld.

" *Hernani*, Oct. 2, 1836.

"Yesterday we attacked the enemy, with five pieces of artillery. The action continued for ten long hours, during all which time more than twenty pieces of cannon were endeavouring to hit me. My battery of three pieces (thirty-two, eighteen, and six pounders) I found, ere long reduced to one, by the want of artillerymen; for in about an hour after the firing began, nine of them and one sergeant fell under the Christino grape shot—four of them dead. As for myself, I was wounded slightly in the face, and that by

I found on our arrival at the little town of Los Arcos, that it had fared better than the nine others which had been entered by the three plundering Christino columns a few days before, in consequence of the Alcalde, Ayuntamiento and principal inhabitants going out to receive and in fact submit

accident. *Voici comment*—an English sergeant-major (Bell), whom I had taken into the artillery by orders of the General, set fire to some powder by mistake and blew up three boxes of cannon cartridges, after which we found ourselves as follows:—two officers dead, a French servant of M. ——— wounded (he will probably die also), and myself, happy enough to escape with my left cheek burned and head singed. But this blow-up was nothing (only for the consequences) compared with one that happened two hours after. At that time I was keeping up the fire of my two pieces, with my face wrapped up, when a twenty-four-pound shell of the enemy fell on a large box full of them, which I had prepared for the Christinos. Their's burst in the battery, but without touching me, and set fire to 100 others piled in the box. Seeing that the *fusé* of one had taken fire, I threw myself down on my face, and remained in that position until all the boxfull had blown up. There were ten several discharges—that is to say, ten of ten at a time. Imagine the uproar which all this caused in the battery, and, above all, my interesting situation! Seeing the shell fall, every body else very naturally ran out, and the enemy thought me blown up a hundred times. *Eh bien ! pas du tout !* I was the best off of any, for every one of those who fled was wounded, and I was not hurt in the least. To follow up this blow, a ball coming in through an embrasure knocked the mop out of my hands, and at the same time made shivers of a handspike which a corporal was using. All this passed in a moment. I can assure you that yesterday I was the happiest of men!" • • •

to them as they approached. Los Arcos is a frontier town without walls, very much exposed to the action and reaction of civil strife, having more than once been in possession of the Christinos since they were smoked out of its caserne with pimento by Zumalacarregui on the 23d February, 1835; so that both parties wisely overlook the inevitable submissions it makes alternately to each, contenting themselves with the exaction of contributions as an equivalent. On the late entry of the Christinos, the town escaped by speedily acceding to their demand of "Don Juan Echevarria's rent," a well known sum of about 70*l.* yearly due to him as one of the twelve beneficiaries of the splendid cathedral of Los Arcos, and which the Christinos declare justly forfeited to the Queen in virtue of his rebellious dignity of President of the Junta of Navarre. The inhabitants, who are decidedly Carlist, would, I was assured, pay the rent over again to Don Juan notwithstanding.

The fortifications in progress and almost completed around the church of San Gregorio, were the subject of Don Sebastian's especial examination. The situation is one of the strongest that could well have been selected, on the summit of a narrow range of hills perfectly commanding both sides and the high road from Los Arcos to Sorlada Piedramillaria, Mendaca and Zuniga. On the

north spreads the rich valley where the serious battle was fought in 1834, when the Christinos succeeded in turning the position of Ituralde, and brought Zumalacarregui with all his reserve into action to retrieve the day. Then, San Gregorio and the country around it were in the hands of the Queen's destroying troops; now, all this fine district reposed under the peaceable sway of Don Carlos, and a stranger might travel through it by day and night as securely as in England. I did not even hear of such a thing as a robbery in the Basque provinces or Navarre, except when the Queen was graciously pleased to send an overwhelming force to pillage the defenceless villages, by way of illustration and earnest of the blessings of a liberal government.

In our progress we rode over four battle-fields, for ever associated with the military genius and triumphs of Zumalacarregui, and a fifth, (the scene of the triple foray of the 14th ult.,) when Irribarran attempted in vain to storm the Basilica of San Gregorio. The scenes of Zumalacarregui's combats were Mendaca, Zuniga and the bridge of Arquijas, at which latter pass, two important battles were fought; the first against an immense Christino force from Los Arcos supported by artillery and led on by Cordova in person on the 15th of December, 1834; the second against equally superior

forces of infantry with cannon from the same garrison, commanded by Lorenzo, on the 15th of February, 1835 : but the Carlist general had chosen his positions so well and stood his ground with such intrepidity, that each attack was repulsed with enormous loss. Don Carlos was present at the combat with Lorenzo. The site of these sanguinary battles is highly picturesque, and as rich in natural beauties as any which the romantic kingdom of Navarre could furnish for the scene of contests, on each of which the liberties of its people depended. The little river Ega here winds its way through the great valley of the Beruesa eastward to Estella, through precipitous cliffs, covered as far as the eye can reach with an evergreen forest of encina arbutus and laurel, whose interlaced branches forbid all passage except along the mule-tracks worn in the face of the rocks, in the fissures of which the trees are rooted. The southern mountain sweeps back in the form of an amphitheatre at the spot where the road to Zuniga descends to the river, and thus, forming a steeper declivity, both mules and men are obliged to traverse zig-zag till they arrive at its base. On the brow stands the Hermitage of Arquijas, crowned with its belfry. Below, the river recedes from the hill-side in a similar sweep, and leaves between a small heart-shaped plain or paddock of

the richest verdure, smooth as a bowling-green, and just 500 yards across. At its northern point, the little bridge (the Thermopylæ of Navarre) stretches its double arch and rude parapet across the river to afford a passage for a single mule or two men at a time. The bridge, the hermitage, the time-worn mule-track, a distant convent and some encinas on the heights, the growth of three centuries, burnt to a black shell by the bivouac fires but still maintaining a luxuriant head, are the only "works of art" within view. There is not even a wheel-rut to be seen. The bridge could not allow the narrowest car to pass, and all the art of mule or *muletero* could not compass the progress of its wheels up the rocky staircases. Zumalacarregui, indeed, could transport on cars the thirteen-inch mortars he cast in the Bastan over the highest mountain tracks, to besiege towns in Guipuscoa and Biscay; but he had the whole population of every village he passed through, men and oxen, day and night, cheerfully tugging with all their hearts and heads, in his service; while on the other hand the Christino Generals, (who could never either purchase or torture the peasantry into the performance of such miracles), were obliged to be content with what the mules alone could effect in the transport of field-pieces over mountain paths. Zumalacarregui had no artillery at Arquijas, but he took possession

of the plain, the bridge and the steep wooded rocks which overhang the river on the north, with a few battalions; and, notwithstanding all the efforts of Cordova's artillery planted at the Hermitage above, and 5000 men to follow where it swept open a road for them below, they could not force a passage to Zaniga. Once, two battalions of Christino carbineers succeeded in forming on the plain, and made a desperate push to cross the bridge. The foremost ranks succeeded, but they were charged with the bayonet by the guides of Navarre, and driven back in great disorder. Fourteen who were cut off from their comrades on the narrow northern bank were instantly killed, as no quarter was then given on either side. Cordova, baffled at the bridge, caused attempts to be made by fording, which is possible even in December, just adjoining the plain; but the cool and watchful Carlists who lined the rocks and trees at the opposite side shot down every man as soon as he climbed up the bank, and after four hours' firing, Cordova gave up the point, leaving 350 killed and carrying off as many wounded. It was seven weeks afterwards that Lorenzo attempted the same pass, with superior forces and all the dear bought experience of Cordova's defeat. His artillery, also placed at the Hermitage, was better served and did great execution on the plains below, while a thousand of his



best men descended the path, formed in column on the plain and rushed on with the bayonet. Zumalacarregui seeing his men waver opposite the bridge, rode down the bank on his white charger and placed himself and his staff in advance of it. This decided the battle. Each peasant would rather face a thousand Christinos than "uncle Thomas" in his wrath. They waited steadily for the advancing column, and poured in a volley that killed the leading officers and threw it into such confusion that it speedily gave way; whereupon Lorenzo retreated to Los Arcos like his predecessor, leaving 200 killed and bearing off 360 wounded, pursued till night-fall by the victor whom no Christino General ever ventured to encounter on the little field of Arquijas a third time. This smiling plain, on which the eye looks down with admiration as the peaceful centre of a silent landscape brilliant with evergreen beauty, is the grave of a thousand men! Only one half of its old Bridge of Battles now remains; the other was some months after blown up by Lacour, under the orders of Zumalacarregui, who, with his characteristic prudence, thus preserved the towns of Zuniga, Orbiezo, Molinas de Santa Cruz, and Santa Cruz de Campezzu from any surprise, while he carried the war elsewhere. It was, afterwards repaired with timber, which afforded our

horses and mules a passage quite as good as before, while the facility of its removal afforded a guarantee that an enemy who may occupy Los Arcos will not select this route as the most convenient in continuation of any foray he may have commenced in the valleys of the Rivera or Beruesa.

As the king rode over the eventful scene, his admiration of the gallant conduct of its defenders broke forth enthusiastically, and he pointed out to Don Sebastian, Colonel Merry and all around him, the spots distinguished by various eventful turns of the two battles—the points occupied by himself, by Zumalacarregui, and Lorenzo; the Hermitage, where the murderous artillery of the enemy was stationed, pouring death into the ranks of his people, and the path up which the multitudes of wounded Christinos were carried thither from the plain;—while another line of fresh men was constantly descending to take their places, and sustain the action. Every inch of the road is associated with incidents of heroic interest, and it is impossible for a Carlist to view it without enthusiasm. As for me, (stranger as I was to Spain and its warfare,) I could not help riding back from Zuniga (over an execrable hill of loose stones) to obtain a view of the entire from the station where Zumalacarregui had stood during both battles.

The king slept at Zuniga, and with his suite pro-

ceeded next morning (Saturday, October 1st), by Orbiezo, the Franciscan monastery of Perola, Antañana and Atouri to Maestu where he visited the military hospital of the province of Alava, then containing 155 wounded and forty-five infirm and sick. He then continued his route over the mountains, and through Guerenó, crossing the fertile valley of the Borunda, leaving Salvatierra and Eridia on his right,—Langarita and Lacey on his left, 'til he arrived at Narvaja, where he slept, and remained on Sunday. On Monday morning he proceeded to inspect the splendid fortification which had been erected on Villa Real's plan, by Brigadier Sylvestre, chief engineer, upon the base of the old towers of the Ladrones de Guevara, perched on a hill which bounds the valley of the Borunda, and presents a magnificent view over an immense extent of level country between Vitoria and Salvatierra; On this great plain, and on the adjoining hills, it is said that nearly 150 towns and villages may be counted from Guevara.

The fortress consists of five series of towers and battlements, the central ones rising pyramidally to a considerable elevation; the entire reminding the English spectator of one of the tallest and narrowest views of Windsor Castle. The Carlist troops call it "Little Gibraltar." The plan is a long quadrangle, with round towers at the angles. It is built

on the height of the rock in a position so defensible by the natural advantages of the ground, that the engineers of every age, from the first erection to the completion, have dispensed with all ceremonial outworks, whether fosse, drawbridge or pallisade. It would indeed be a difficult task to sink any ditches in the solid rock, and the garrison finds all the water which the skies afford, little enough for its own purposes within the walls. The lower towers are already mounted with fourteen pieces of artillery of various calibre from twenty-four pounders downwards, several of which were obtained at the capture of Plencia; others, of heavy metal were lying in readiness to be slung into their embrasures as soon as the carriages were ready to receive them. The construction exhibits the greatest attention to solidity and neatness of architecture, with an economy of space which excites admiration. The exterior walls are of cut stone, of very efficient solidity at all elevations. These as well as the interior galleries are pierced with loop-holes at every step, and nothing is neglected to render the superior stages of the fortress separate and commanding citadels with respect to those below.

The troops assembled here were reviewed outside the fort by the King, who also minutely inspected the armoury and stores of the garrison. Their Biscayan muskets (which are accounted the

best in the service) were in the neatest order; ammunition for all arms was in abundance; numerous sacks of grain and a great heap of home-made shoes were apparent; but what especially attracted my attention, was a large airy guard-room kitchen, well lighted through the immense walls, and decidedly the neatest I had seen since I entered Spain. The King examined everything, and spoke to everybody with a degree of interest and affability which was truly gratifying, and seemed highly pleased with the progress of the work since his last visit. The entire is indeed a noble monument of what enthusiastic loyalty can effect in the absence of ordinary pecuniary stimuli to exertion,—deprived of which, the revolutionary edifice at Madrid appears to be fast falling to pieces. It would be difficult to guess the number of hundreds of thousands of pounds which would figure in Mendizabal's estimates for the execution of such a job; and my readers will perhaps be somewhat surprised to learn that since its commencement, on the 13th December, 1835, it has not cost Don Carlos or his government a peseta beyond the regular rations, pay and clothing, distributed to the troops and workmen (who are all volunteer soldiers also) provided by the four Juntas as usual. Nothing for materials; nothing for the site; nothing for plans, and premiums, and contingencies, and extras, and damages, and ordnance,

and stores. The site was wrested from the Christians:—stones and timber were on the spot: furniture, frame-work, iron, cut stone, tools and a variety of useful materials, were at hand in the several government stores preserved for public purposes from the houses and property abandoned by Christiano fugitives, as the conquering Carlist arms penetrated into the strongholds of their enemies. The ordnance also, had been very appropriately seized by the strong hand from Christiano forts and turned against their cowardly columns; making them leave the high road which leads from Vitoria to Pampeluna (whenever they ventured on a sortie from either) at a very respectable distance from Guevara. Some of the brass guns of twenty-four pounds calibre, cast in the royal foundry at Seville, lately taken at Plencia and planted here, are of the first quality. They will no doubt prove highly efficient in the hands of their present possessors, if ever their old masters venture to look for them in this eagle's nest. Whilst inspecting the artillery, Don Carlos cast his eye on an old gun-carriage, which had borne the famous eighteen-pounder surnamed *Abuela* or "the Grandmother," by the soldiers, from its age and infirmities. With this heroine and a 7-inch mortar, Zumalacarregui commenced his siege of Echarri-Arranaz. She burst twice at the mouth, and was each time cut shorter; but, as the powder next blazed out through

cracks in her sides, Zumalacarregui was obliged to bind her round with ropes before he could take the town. With this battering train and a few which he gained in his progress, he nevertheless contrived to take also Trevino, Villafranca, Bergara, Eybar, Tolosa and Ochandiano; when having accumulated a tolerable progeny, the cowardly garrisons of Estella, Salvatierra and the Bastan fled before "the Grandmother and her children." In grateful remembrance of the services she had done the state, the king, who never forgets an old friend, desired that her carriage should be carefully preserved in the armoury of Guevara. The Grandmother herself is at present safely buried in a debateable neighbourhood, but her resurrection can be effected in half an hour should her services be wanted in that quarter, (for it is believed that she is still capable of taking a town or two on her own account) but the fact is, that the quantity of excellent artillery obtained through her exertions, enables the Carlist ordnance office to dispense with her services, and so she is allowed to rest in peace.

Don Carlos having taken leave of the Commandante Sopelana and a number of officers of distinction who had come to meet his majesty at the fort and witness the review, rode down the hill to view the military factory established in the village at its base, in the old palacio of the Conde de Oñate, for the manu-

facture and repair of fire-arms, bayonets, trumpets, drums, carriages for artillery and the various implements appertaining to that service. They were also then making a large clock for the fortress there. The workmen particularly prided themselves on the tone of their drums, and on the new touch-hole pieces, which they screw into damaged cannon. The troops which his majesty reviewed on the hill side were the first and third battalions of Alava, a battalion of guides of the same province and a squadron of Alavese Lancers, under the command of Col. Moreno. As they went through their evolutions on the hill side, with the fort in the background,—the salvos of artillery smoking and thundering around,—reverberating from a hundred valleys and ravines till a new discharge caught up and prolonged the echoes,—the whole afforded a combination of sights and sounds which produced an impression I shall never forget. The Alavese infantry are quite wild-looking enough to give a brigandine character to any landscape they might march over; but the Lancers in motion were the essence of the errant picturesque, as, riding up along the ridge of the hill, they were seen against the sky with their lance-pennons fluttering in the breeze, or rushing in a body down its side as if charging an enemy below. It seemed as if the inequalities of the ground they scampered over made no difference to



the wild-looking animals that bore them. Dressed as they were in an amusing variety of caps, jackets and trowsers that still bespoke the prevalence of "the good old plan" of making their toilet on the field of battle from the spoils of their enemies, I could almost fancy that I beheld flitting before me the figures of the old Ladrões of Guevra. But the Ladrões have been swept off the hills of Alava, and, what is more to the purpose, the Christino Ladrões of Madrid and Westminster have been chased away too. The Alavese have their own again, and they are well able to hold it.

The king and his suite next crossed the country, passing through Marietta, to review the camp at the old Venta of Arlaban, destroyed by the Christinos on the high road from Vitoria to Salinas, where the last sweep of the gently swelling plain of the Borunda affords an opportunity of encamping at the entrance of the important pass descending into Biscay and Guipuscoa. Here we found the third battalion of Navarre, the second of Alava, and its third Provisional, with two brass four-pound field pieces (taken at the defeat of Osma at Vitoria), well mounted on carriages of British fashion, drawn by six horses and attended by ammunition waggons furnished with seats for the artillery-men. These troops were commanded by Brigadier Goñi, and presented a very soldier-like array. They were in

high spirits, cheered Don Carlos enthusiastically, and appeared to want nothing but active employment, which, however, the garrison of Vitoria was too wise to afford them at its own expense. The king and suite then proceeded down the pass and through the town of Salinas, until they reached Escoriaza, where they remained for the night. As the presence of the royal cortége in a mountain village left few comforts of bed and board for other travellers, I proceeded with a friend to the residence of the Marquis de Valdespina in Mondragon, where we received a hospitable welcome which left us no cause to envy a king. Here we found assembled, General Berastegui, President of the Deputation (or Junta) of Alava and Commandant of the Army of Reserve; Señor Aguiluz, President of the Deputation of Guipuscoa, and Intendant-General of Public Vigilance; Señor Modet, President of the Junta of Navarre, Governor of the Supreme Tribunal of that kingdom, and Counsellor of State; also Brigadier Urbistondo, chief of Villa Real's staff. The Marquis is President of the Deputation of Biscay, and, with the three other presidents was engaged in the execution of a royal commission of investigation and organization of resources for the more effective maintenance of the troops, and a more active and energetic supply of every branch of the public service. The claims of

the fortifications to a liberal supply of labour (it is all the hills require to make them into forts) were cheerfully conceded, for they are universal favourites, and the peasantry of Mondragon were at that moment setting an exemplary pattern by transforming the little mount of Santa Barbara, which overhangs the road above their town, into a very commanding crown redoubt. But we were called by the Marquis from the hills to supper, or rather to a feast. "You have arrived on a lucky day," said our host; "This day three years, the 3rd of October, 1833, (four days after the death of Ferdinand), I fulfilled the commission which Don Carlos sent me, by proclaiming him in Bilboa, at the head of two hundred men, King of Spain and Lord of Biscay, Alava and Guipuscoa. We have had some hard fighting since to maintain his title, and I have been burnt out of house and home; but we are getting on to Madrid notwithstanding. He has now 30,000 men at arms at his back, and is already hailed enthusiastically as sovereign in twelve hundred towns and villages."

## CHAPTER IX.

ON the 6th October, Don Carlos and his suite arrived at Durango amidst the joyous acclamations of the whole population, the majority of whom ran out and almost overwhelmed him with their hearty welcome. The patronas, in windows and balconies hung with shawls, curtains and gay draperies of all colours and patterns, seemed to vie with each other in attracting his attention. One old lady in her hurry hung out a *chemise* ! Never did a prince more gratefully return the kindness of his people. He knew a thousand acquaintances in the crowd, and endeavoured to convey to each some token of friendly recognition. What a good-humoured jostling to get near him ! and what a medley of volunteer drums, fifes and tabors that seemed to play all the merrier for want of elbow room ! Nobody listened to the music of the King's fine brass band, for every one was cheering or shouting "*Viva Carlos*

*Quinto !*" or making some other music of his own ; —then the dancers with their fancy dresses and castanets and tamborines !—but I could not see one of their fine steps for the spring-tide of a crowd that still rushed on between us. The reception he experienced was however only a continuation of what he had met with all along his route from Estella. We were never beyond the sound of the church bells which rang him out of one village and into another. The act of ringing these in England on complimentary occasions is a very common-place affair, and executed in a very prosaic style,—but it is a different thing in the Basque mountains. The greater part of the paths which lead through them can only accommodate a single horse at a time, so, wishing to see the country and avoid embarrassing the royal cortége, I rode half a mile or so a head with a few friends who happened to be similarly disposed. The instant we caught sight of a church in turning round a hill, or rather as soon as the steeple-sentinel caught sight of a single horseman, its bells set a whirling and clanging as if they were mad, and kept it up merrily without intermission till the King reached the church-door, when the steeple was deserted by old and young that they might shout "*Viva Carlos Quinto !*" at his side, and get a word or a look in reply. On his departure, the

bells were set a going again as vehemently as before, without the slightest pretensions to the production of anything that could be termed a harmonic chime (indeed it would be rather difficult, considering that the majority are balanced by heavy counterpoises of wood, stone and iron, and that they are spun round by hand in ringing, with more or less speed according to the good will of the whirler; but their tones are separately very fine, approaching to the quality of the Chinese gong, and the echoing effects in the hollows of the hills, varying singularly at every step of our route, afforded us a constant source of admiration. With respect to the reception which the King met in every town and village, I thought little or nothing of the respectful ranks which the Alcalde, the Curé, the chief men of the place or the monks of the adjoining convent presented; these are matters of etiquette and matters of course. Even the young and beautiful Señoritas who came promenading along the path in full dress to meet *El Rey*, their rich black satin mantillas thrown so gracefully over their tall combs, their fans played with such an air, and their *Basquiñas* (which now all Europe attempts to imitate) managed—I can't find a more appropriate word—more gracefully still;—all struck me still as being matter of fashion as much as evidence of loyalty. Fortunately there were more

certain tests. "When you visit your acquaintances," wrote Lord Chesterfield to his son, "don't place any dependence on the kind reception you may receive from the master and mistress of the house, but carefully attend to the way you are treated by the servants and the children: thus you will speedily discover the real estimation you are held in." The rule holds equally good in the mountains of Navarre, Alava and Biscay, where it was truly convincing to witness the enthusiasm of the peasantry and the delight of the children, as they crowded round the King. At Piedramilleria the sight was most interesting. The women embraced his hands, feet and horse, until he really had enough to do to prevent the spirited animal from trampling on them. Everywhere the children on his route from the neighbouring villages—some with their *saladas* (tambourines)—some with pipes, assembled to welcome him with dancing,—then running on before the *cortége* and turning every two or three minutes to shout "*vivas*" for their own King. I shall not soon forget the *distingue* and ferocious air with which our advanced party was challenged by some little half-naked children belonging to a village from which the Christinos had lately carried off their spoons and porringers, breakfasts and dinners. One audacious urchin stood on a heap of stones in our path and demanded of the armed and

decorated *Señores oficiales*,—" *Buen Carlites ?*" A laughing brigadier-general answered, "*Viva !*" but the child, disliking perhaps "the cut of our beards," pursued his interrogatory with "*Viva Carlos Quinto ?*" whereupon we all paid him and his cause the just tribute to "enunciate ourselves with good emphasis and discretion." In short, I found patriotism and loyalty feelings "that came home to the business and bosoms" of all ages; and I can now myself fully feel what the extent of his power is in these mountains. In England people have little idea of it. Indeed the King's character is very much misunderstood amongst us. In the Basque provinces he is well known to be of a most kindly, considerate and conciliating disposition, ever attentive to the feelings and interests of all around him, whom it seems to be his study to make happy. His acts, words and gestures seem to spring alike from constitutional benevolence, so that it would be difficult for him to say or do a harsh thing. I have never witnessed or heard of a single act of *hauteur* or ostentation on his part; and in the quiet urbanity of his manner and the simplicity of his dress, he more resembles a plain English gentleman than a Spanish Grandee. His tastes, too, are decidedly English. Confident of universal respect and sympathy, he did not attempt to elicit vulgar admiration on his journey by the



glitter of a single ornament, but wore all the way an English hat and very comfortable surtout. The same taste prevails throughout his little court, where scarcely a decoration is to be seen, except an inch or two of the ribbon of the Order of Knighthood of St. Ferdinand, or the Gold Key of a chamberlain.

During our progress I availed myself of every opportunity of examining into the agricultural operations of those parts of Navarre, Alava and Biscay through which we took our way. In a ride from Estella to Durango the greatest possible variety of soil prevails, but everywhere the husbandman was found turning it to account to the best of his ability. The exceptions were few and far between, and so striking as in a manner to establish the rule. His plough is indeed a poor instrument, possessing but the rudiments of a share and mould-board with a single stilt, but the ground he drives it through is easily stirred as deep as suffices to give him a generous crop, which amply repays his labour. I cannot speak of the goodness of the millet crop by comparison, but the wheat and barley are equal to any that England can produce with double labour. The latter is chiefly reserved for feeding mules and horses, especially in Biscay, where the cultivation of oats falls off. But the maize is planted everywhere and eaten everywhere; not that it is a grain preferable either for a market-

able crop or for diet, but it stands as a friend in need which will thrive amongst mountain mists, rocky steeps and lowland marshes, salt or fresh, where the plough could not go, or where other corn would perish; and, whether its grain ripen or not, will certainly afford a luxuriant crop of forage. As far as I saw in my ride, few potatoes were planted in Navarre and Alava except in cottage gardens. These are rendered good for nothing by the national cookery, in which they are treated as mere turnips—peeled and stewed in company with meat. I prevailed on a few of the natives to try the Irish mode of cookery (boiling them entire in their coats), by which they are transformed into an agreeable and nutritious diet, as some millions daily experience; but with all our care, they still came to table wet and tasteless; so I gave up the point, and agreed with the inhabitants in holding to the culture and use of their fine white wheat, which, when well prepared, affords the most exquisite bread. They do not, indeed, economise in their baking, and for want of proper barm make it twice as heavy as that of England or France. However, it affords the soldiers substantial rations; they like it well, and receive as much of it and of beef as they can possibly consume (with a little to spare in exchange for vegetables); they thrive well on both, are well content with

both, and what more can be desired in such a case ? In the country adjoining the coast, the soil is much cooler, and produces very fine potatoes. At the siege of Bilboa, we found the peasantry cultivating and cooking them to perfection.

On descending from the high table land of Navarre and Alava through the renowned pass of Salinas, along the banks of the river Deba by the great road from Alava into Guipuscoa, new features appeared. Here the turnip and clover culture began, and the wheat was discontinued. Not a plough was to be seen, all the work being performed with the spade-fork and hoe ; and it is surprising to observe the quantity of ground which even one man can turn up with a pair of the former, working both together, one with the right hand and foot, and the other similarly with the left. But when a dozen men club their forks to turn over a field, the superiority of this mode of culture is seen most strikingly. Standing in a line, they strike them down perpendicularly,—then pull altogether, and turn over a sod that would astonish an English ploughman. Stepping back, they repeat their combined movement, and thus a field is rapidly and deeply tilled. The heights of Arlaban above our road exhibited on either hand the rare sight of pastures ever verdant from the constant supply of moisture from the low-sailing clouds (notable in

the dispatches of General Evans as "the fogs"). The vines, no longer able to ripen a-field, creep up the cottage balconies and hang in festoons. Further on, near the town of Mondragon, roses grow luxuriantly, and the narrow valley for miles seems one garden. At the upper entrance by the camp of Arlaban, a few burned houses mark the route of the Anglo-Spanish forces on their disastrous attempt to penetrate this fortress-valley. Below all was smiling security, peace, and plenty. On arriving at Durango I examined with minuteness the style of garden cultivation which prevailed around. Maize was the staple article, generally supporting a crop of climbing alubias. Turnip fields intervened, and several of the latter also exhibited rich crops of clover springing up to succeed them. Not a fallow was to be seen; and some fields presented the extraordinary combination of maize, alubias, turnips and clover all growing freely together, the maize and turnips keeping their proper distances—the alubias climbing as usual—and the young clover covering every inch of soil between. In addition to all this, I have seen pumpkins and calabashes carefully planted on the dry-banks or borders where paths crossed a field, affording the air, light, and warmth essential to their development.

The aromatic herbage of Alava presents a rich field for the range of the honey-bee, and houses

actually full of hives constructed of large hollow logs of timber built into the wall, were to be seen perched in most picturesque situations under jutting crags, which rose over head like steeples, or stood out like horses rearing and ready to start from the cliff. Portions of these rugged rocks and their herbage presented most fantastic profiles and figures of men and animals. A fine young French mule on which I rode, seemed very much puzzled with the appearance of the country, as the steep and narrow mountain tracks sometimes brought us to a sharp turn over the edge of a torrent, sometimes to a natural wall of rock, up which we were to climb as best we might; sometimes the strand descended to the road—(I say *descended*, for all above was crumbling shingle that strewed the road like a sea-side scene, except that the fragments were not rounded,) sometimes the road dipped into the bed of the river. At times it led through a ravine where we could not see many feet before us; then a little further on, a splendid panorama opened around. Sometimes a path led right over the height of a mountain (like the Roman roads in Wales, to prevent ambuscades) which afforded the most splendid views; but these are precisely the land marks of the bees as they journey over the provinces, where they assemble in such inquisitive crowds that it was impossible to adjust a telescope

in their company. My mule, who had an eye to the picturesque, kept me constantly on the *qui vive*? She saw a thousand strange shapes in the fantastic rocks and roots around and above her. Sometimes she would spy a score of wolves rushing down on us among the long slate fragments clothed with fern; sometimes a huge boulder of rock with its garment of shaggy heath lay right on the road like a lion in the path; while the roar of a river underground (over which a maize-covered field had quietly slid down) added new terrors to the sight. She started a thousand times on such discoveries, but never stumbled. Indeed I may say I daily owed my life to her care, for although in her alarms and side bounds her hind feet sometimes slipped over the edge of a precipice, she always held fast with her two fore ones; thus giving me time to jump off (or rather on), and assist her to gain *terra firma* again. My fellow travellers as well as their mules and horses were accustomed to these things, and passed along merrily without minding the picturesque, making the woods and valleys ring with the splendid chorus of "*Viva Don Carlos!*" and the *Requetè* which the Guides of Navarre sing on marching into battle; airs, which no doubt have won many fields for the king. Enthusiasm carries the day in Spain as well as every where else.

The week before the royal cortège reached

Durango, Viscount Ranelagh and Count Mortara had arrived there. They were received by the King on his entry with his usual courtesy and kindness, and the latter was speedily placed on the staff of the General in Chief, Villa Real. The former, who had commenced a tour of Navarre and the Basque Provinces, remained unattached, till General Eguia took the command at the siege of Bilboa in the beginning of November, when he accompanied him as a volunteer Ayudante. Lord Ranelagh avowed that his chief object in coming to the court of Don Carlos was to endeavour to prevail on his ministry to abolish the cruel Decree of Durango;—the enactment of which had created such a strong prejudice through the British empire, against both his cause and his administration. Several interviews took place, but the utmost that Señor Erró could be prevailed on to accede to, was, the extension of the benefit of the Eliot convention to all British soldiers and marines serving under Lord John Hay, and actually in the service of his Britannic Majesty. Finally on the 12th of October, orders were sent by the Minister of War, to the commandants on the coast-line to respect all prisoners who might be taken wearing the British cockade. The following manifesto (subsequently published) explains very clearly the distinction taken by the Carlists between the two classes of British troops.

**“ROYAL DECREE.**

“The King our master, being desirous of drawing a just distinction between the regular foreign troops and the mercenary adventurers who, in consequence of crimes against society, are obliged to fly to the standard which revolution raises in other countries, and now directs against Spain ;—and willing to give a proof of his benevolent principles and high sentiments, hath ordered and doth decree as follows :—

“That the officers and men of the Royal English Marines, who, obliged by order of their government, have come in compliance with their duty, possibly against the dictates of their own consciences and free will, to the coasts of Guipuscoa and Biscay, and who may fall by the fortune of war into the hands of the troops of his Majesty, shall be respected and held as prisoners of war, the decree of Durango published before the recruitment, applying alone to adventurers who abandoning their own homes and renouncing the laws of their country, come voluntarily to extend anarchy and give a foreign assistance to a cause with which they have no concern.

(Signed)

“ B. ERRO.”

“ Villareal, July 15, 1836.”

The latter date appears to require some expla-



nation. Nothing had been heard of this decree, previous to Lord Ranelagh's agitation of the question in the beginning of October, and the above did not appear in the public journals until the 24th of March 1837, two months and a half after the retirement of Señor Erro.

The Councils of war and of the interior speedily arrived at Durango, and, as well as all the other functionaries assembled there, earnestly engaged in the active organization of their several departments. The Lieutenant-General Moreno succeeded the late Count Villemur as President of the council of war. His associates were Major-General Masarasa, Major-General Oiabanco, and Major-General Martinez. The council of the interior was composed as follows:—Señor Asnarez, President. Then follow Señors Moran, Manzano, Modet, Lamasparto, Reyaldo, Lavanca, and the Marquis de Valdespina.

On the 11th of October, a new brass mortar, cast at Oñate, was brought to Durango for the inspection of the King. It was considered the best piece of work which the Royal foundries had turned out, and certainly did great credit to the artist, Señor Esteban Echebaster, considering the many difficulties he had to contend with in the formation of so heavy a piece of work. It weighs 76 arobas, each of 26lbs. English (17 cwt. 2 qrs. 16lb.) and is 14

pulgados (13 inches English) calibre. The execution of this piece of ordnance speaks sufficiently for the progress which the Carlists have made in the art of brass-founding within the last two years, since the time that Captain Reyna (who had never seen a cannon-foundry) first tried his hand at it, and transformed their brass pots and candlesticks into small mortars and howitzers.

Whilst these works were in progress at Oñate, and corresponding preparations were everywhere making in silence for the siege of Bilboa or Vitoria, (I believe it was not decided till the 18th October, that the strength of the Carlist army should be brought against the former) I made a tour in company with a friend amongst the Royal factories of arms and ammunition, which, owing to the detached positions of the works, required several days to examine them satisfactorily. The artisans, for the most part, worked in their own houses, mills, and forges, which the engrossing claims of this eventful contest had everywhere converted from the fulfilment of the purposes of peaceful industry, to the fabrication of weapons and munitions of war. Their productions were, however, of a very superior class in everything relating to small arms, in which, indeed, they have had considerable experience; the artisans of Ermua, Eibar, Elgoibar, and Placentia having been constantly engaged in the manufacture

of muskets, bayonets, swords and pistols to supply the Royal armies for generations past. The feelings and interests which naturally sprung out of their connections and constant intercourse with the authorities at Madrid, tended in the beginning of the war very considerably to retard the successes of Don Carlos in this district, for the Spaniards do not easily forego their habits and associates in whatever cause they have been adopted; and it was only the overwhelming force of public opinion in his favour throughout Biscay and Guipuscoa which prevailed on the stubborn artisans of the valleys of the Rio Deba to change their hands, and supply the army of Don Carlos instead of that of Christina. As I rode from Durango to Ermua, along the excellent road which was cut through these mountains by the Marquis de Valdespina just before the war broke out, I saw a striking illustration of their tenacity to the interests of their then employers. The family residence of this nobleman at that period was a very fine building, erected in 1730, and known throughout Spain as El Palacio de Ermua, situated in the centre of a long and narrow valley rich in pastoral beauty. The rocky hills crowned with forests, look down on the neat village clustered around the church whose cupola and spire rise gracefully in the midst; the little river Deba which leaps down from mill to mill to turn the armourers' lathes and

blow their forge fires, winds through the palace garden, and bathes its sculptured walls. Picturesque combinations open at every step, but, alas! nothing of the palace, save the walls, remain.

On the 14th of August, 1834, a party of Urbanos from the adjoining town of Eibar, hastened to fulfil the denunciations of Rodil, and arriving at Ermua, plundered and then set fire to the palace and five other houses, also the property of the Marquis de Valdespina. A collection of paintings (perhaps the most valuable possessed by a subject in Spain,) including some *chefs d'œuvres* of Titian, Murillo, and one precious *bijou*, "*La Pieta*" by Raphael, were all consumed or destroyed by the Christinos. I saw the remains of one, "The taking down from the Cross," by Titian, which in the general confusion had fallen from the walls, and might have escaped if one of the incendiaries had not wantonly made the sign of the cross with his sword on the picture by slashing through it right and left. An extensive library also perished in the flames, amongst which the owner had to deplore many ancient manuscripts and a collection of works in the Basque language, including valuable national and historical documents, some by the first American discoverers:—amongst others, "*La Reunion de Actas de Juntas Generales de Vizcaya*," and "*La Cronologia de los Señores de Vizcaya*,"

edited by the King Don Pedro, and printed for him at the Royal press at Turin. The solid central cupola and spire (built by the munificent ancestor of the Marquis in the same style as that with which he crowned the adjoining church) still remains, and looks out proudly over the massive walls. The owner (who possesses the greatest landed property in the province) was naturally anxious to rebuild his palace, but wisely postponed this pleasure till the remnant of the Christinos should be expelled from its capital (only seven leagues distant), a task in which he was not a little interested in his capacity of President of the Carlist Junta.

And what became of the plundering incendiary Urbanos of Eibar? Their evil spirit, Rodil, being driven out soon after by Zumalacarregui, they were left at the mercy of those they had outraged—were forgiven—grew ashamed of themselves—and have ever since been hard at work in their own fires on account of Don Carlos,—labouring in their vocation to repair the mischief they had been doing to the cause,—as I found on continuing my route a mile or two beyond Ermua. The arrangements of the Queen's Generals in the formation of the armies which successively invaded the Basque provinces and Navarre, afforded the Carlists, a good opportunity of discriminating and dealing with their foes. They had one class enlisted from the refuse and

desperadoes of society, including Carlist deserters, who served both as military and police; were clothed, maintained and armed in the most complete style, received a peseta a day (about 11*d.*—four times the pay of a soldier of the line), were permitted to plunder, imprison, &c., at discretion—and, to complete the picture, were allowed to carry bayonets with jagged points, which gave incurable wounds. These ruffians were rapidly picked off by the Navarrese sharpshooters who always paid the especial compliment of aiming at them in preference, and, when taken prisoners, were never admitted to disgrace the ranks of the Carlist peasantry (who, indeed, would not have served with them); and, previous to the Eliot convention, whether in the field or after it, their doom was fixed. Now any that are captured, of the few who yet survive the campaigns of Zumalacarregui, are kept at hard labour on the roads and fortifications, and in the repair of the convents, &c. destroyed by Rodil with their especial assistance. The Christino troops of the line when taken prisoners, were, ever since the capture of Echarri Arranaz by Zumalacarregui (even before the Eliot convention) permitted to serve if they wished, in the Carlist ranks; and since that treaty have been as well lodged and fed as their captors, while waiting to be exchanged according to its provisions. The third class, the

Urbanos, have been generally still more favourably treated, as it was considered they were fighting against Don Carlos by compulsion and *par circumstance*, being fixtures and parts of the villa. Those of Eibar were the most mischievous in their way that I have yet heard of, and their lenient treatment on submission may be taken as full proof of the wise and pacific policy pursued by Don Carlos towards the populations of other hostile towns which have fallen into his hands.

I saw in this valley an ingenious adaptation of natural resources. In forming the new road, a quantity of thin flag strata had been quarried through. These the peasantry had fixed on edge round their new fields adjoining the road, and as the valley is in many parts rather narrow, these flags, which are almost as thin as ton slates, economised space most conveniently. They have not a very rural appearance, for they transform the enclosures into something like card boxes; but an English eye is glad to find anything of a slaty structure to repose on by the wayside, after the endless expanse of tiles which Spanish roofs present. I did not see a single slated house there, although I have no doubt that those thin flags would answer the purpose very well, and be much lighter than the load of pantiles laid upon the rafters. The peasantry were all a-field as I rode along, thrashing the chestnut

trees with long saplings, while the children gathered up the fruit, and the women carried home the full baskets on their heads. Chestnuts boiled and roasted are at this season found on every dinner table, and appear to form a very material article of winter food in the Basque provinces. The October sunshine was scorching up the maize foliage. Except in the deep and shady valleys this crop and its clinging tribute of alubias were almost ripe everywhere, and the farmers of Biscay were incessantly reaping and thrashing. The barn floor of the Urbanos of Durango was the street before their own door swept clean, and they could not have a better while the weather continued fine. The four streets of the town run in parallel lines from the market-place to the Barrier Plaza at the other end. These are all neatly flagged with sand stone throughout, and from one side to the other laid with such a strand fall that the rain is conducted to a shallow open sewer in the centre (into which also the projecting roofs pour it *con amore*), whence frequent numerous small holes conduct it into covered sewers beneath. The widest street is just five yards and a half, but as very few cars ever penetrate beyond the paved market place except in harvest time, the flagging lasts for ever.

Having inspected the several stages of the gun and sword fabrication in which the workmen of



Eibar were engaged, (wherein, as far as I could judge, they displayed every proficiency attainable in the absence of steam power and the resistless machinery it sets in motion in England for the improvement of every art)—I continued my route to Placentia, along the banks of the river Deba. The agricultural aspect which this steep and narrow valley presents, speaks highly for the amount of intelligence and patient labour engaged in its cultivation. The natural slope of the entire surface for miles above and below Placentia, is the greatest of any I have ever seen under culture ; so great, indeed, that the mountain showers which fall in torrents, would wash the soil and its crop into the river if the farmers had not taken the precaution to throw it into little terraces at every few yards. These seem, from the opposite side, to present a countless succession of wavy steps, up which the spectator imagines he could walk *seriatim*, and which are in reality so close, that for the most part, the arable surface is only four or five yards across, and in some places a man standing on the edge of one step, could touch the next above him with his walking stick. The original surface of the slope is nowhere to be seen. The present is all artificial, and, viewed in profile at sharp turns of the road, affords a striking alternation of facets, one set nearly horizontal, the other nearly vertical

like the silhouette of a saw or of a staircase. In many parts, the strata of red ironstone which compose these mountains stands so upright that the farmer spares himself the trouble of building artificial walls, and having adjusted the soil on their several edges or landing-places, sows his maize thereon, or leaves it to throw up a natural herbage for the cattle that traverse these ridges with all the *navet  * of wild goats. The general frontal aspect bears a whimsical resemblance to the wavy pattern that Constable has impressed upon the patent calico binding of his new editions, and would probably remind a fisherman of the ripples of a sandy shore at full ebb. A South-down farmer would feel sorely puzzled at the sight, and, perhaps, return home in a state of surprise admitting of no increase even if he were to find the face of the cliffs of Dover cultivated to the summit.

At Placentia we found the *Casa Real* converted into the magazine of the entire manufacturing district under the superintendence of Don Manoel de Congosta, Director-General of the fabrication of arms, by whom the various stores were thrown open to our inspection. We saw the operations in every department proceeding with the most satisfactory regularity, each article made or repaired according to approved patterns, then examined and proved with jealous care. The regulation musket is that

approved of in 1828 and confirmed by Don Carlos in 1835; the barrel of a calibre between those of England and France (seventeen bullets to the pound), secured to the walnut stock by three brass clasps and springs: the priming pan is also brass, the well-rounded butt guard is steel. The work is beautifully turned out of hand, and when placed side by side with an English musket, appears a very superior article. The Spaniards infinitely prefer it, declaring it carries farther—will bear more hardship though much lighter, and lastly, will fit any man's shoulder; all matters of moment in Spanish warfare. The bayonet is adjusted on the muzzle by a slide ring. The entire cost is six dollars; a price rather high when compared with what our Birmingham millers will grind up a batch at, for export to Africa, viz., nine shillings each; yet still moderate when compared to what our infantry muskets cost, viz., thirty-two shillings each.

The workmen could turn out 1000 muskets and bayonets per month, which are in such demand for the Asturias, Catalonia, Arragon and Castile, that a very small stock remains in store at any time. The most conspicuous lot on hand was labelled "*Ingleza recompuesto*," (English repaired)—a very necessary precaution before using the species of article sent to Spain as a sample of British manufacture, and which (whether placed in the hands of

Spanish Christinos or Westminster auxiliaries) seem to have been constructed on such destructive democratic principles that they have successfully kicked themselves and their masters *hors de combat*. The factories in connection with Placentia could turn out 3000 muskets per month if at full work, for they muster 400 artisans; but the fact was that the sinews of war were deficient in the provinces, and in their absence the most important capabilities lay uncultivated. Don Carlos, in this and twenty other instances, resembles a man with thousands of pounds at his banker's, unable to lay his hand on paper, pen, and ink, to write a draft for them;—so he contents himself with repairing the 318,600 muskets sent out by Lord Palmerston, according as they fall into his hands.

At the upper end of the town I found a work in progress of a nature that rather surprised me. An Augustinian convent (which, for want of room on the bank of the river, had actually been built in its bed), had last winter been shaken down very unceremoniously by the heavy floods which raged through the channel, hurling along huge boulders of foreign aspect brought from the distant sierras. The good Padres, nothing daunted by the war of elements, the wreck of monasteries or the threats of Isturiz and Mendizabel, immediately proceeded to rebuild their dwelling with additions and improve-

ments. The entire (which formed a little villa of itself) appeared almost finished, and stood head to flood, like an immense floating bath, furnished at the bow with what in the steamers on the Mississippi would be termed a snag-room, a projecting pointed caisson to abide the wear and tear of those quadruple allied levellers, storm, rain, floods and rocks, far more dangerous than the democrats of Madrid; at least, so the Augustinians seemed to think, for they were going to considerable expense in the re-edification of their convent. I had met with many instances of contempt of the Queen's authority, and confidence in the stability of the power of Don Carlos; but this practical illustration was the most convincing of all. I place little reliance on my own capabilities of estimating the chances and changes of this civil war, but I entertain a great respect for the authority of the holy fathers on such a controversial point. I did not hear a word of their preaching, but their practice was quite sufficient for me, and I departed with a firm belief that the order for the dissolution of monasteries could not easily be carried into effect in the loyal town of Placentia:—also that the water-palace of the Augustinians might be safely insured at a very trifling premium,—“the dangers of the waves and rocks always excepted.”

Continuing our course to Vergara, we inspected

the military hospital for Guipuscoa situated there, then containing 100 wounded and 50 sick. It was by no means equal to that of Yrache in Navarre. There was no separate classification of cases requiring surgical treatment, so the other patients' nerves were of course frequently tried by the performance of operations which had been better kept out of sight. The floor of the *Botica* was plentifully strewn with leaves of the *Cynoglossum*, *Hederacea glechoma*,—roots of the *Tussilago*, the *Solanum Dulcamara*, and a multitude of native herbs recently gathered to dry. There seemed no want of medical materials, but the surgical department was very defective. One poor fellow had received a singular wound; a ball pierced his left eye, continued its course and finally lodged beneath the maxillary muscle, where it could plainly be felt, half way between the ear and eyebrow. The *Boticario* had prudently left it there, and the patient was getting well, walking about, and feeling very little inconvenience except when he attempted to manage a hard crust.

Some friends, resident in the town, took us to the convent of Santa Maria, whose nuns had embroidered a uniform coat for Don Carlos (the first worn by him in Biscay) while the town was actually in the hands of the Christinos, just previous to their defeat at Descarga,—a dangerous indulgence of

patriotism, which Espartero would, had he discovered it, have probably repaid by setting their house on fire. Here we had the pleasure of seeing two very fine children of Zumalacarregui, residing for their education; Doña Ignacia, the heiress of the dukedom of Vitoria, eight and a half years old, and her sister Doña Pepita, aged seven. A third girl Micheala, of three years of age, was with her mother. We were here also introduced to a beautiful girl of sixteen or seventeen, Doña Vicenta Costau, whom Rodil had in a savage mood ordered to be thrown into the burning house of her father who was suspected of Carlism. The party of destructives engaged in this work were disturbed by some Carlists who arrived to the rescue just in time to save this interesting girl from a dreadful death. She gratefully recognized an individual of our party as one who had been the most active amongst her deliverers on that eventful day.

We next proceeded to Oñate where Don Juan Montenegro, the Commandant-General of Artillery, was engaged in getting his guns mounted in the English style. The University there was in fact the Ordnance Department,—the entire basement story (with the exception of the chapel of its founder,) being occupied as stores and workshops. The carriages were turned out in a very neat and

workmanlike manner, and the entire establishment displayed very satisfactory proofs of what could be effected by attention, economy, and good contrivance, notwithstanding the poverty of the Carlist Exchequer. The rector of the University, Don Nicholas Sanz, has (at the present period when war absorbs almost every mind in the provinces,) few collegiate duties to fulfil, but he has constant and copious occupation as sole editor of the *Gaceta Oficial de Oñate*. He showed us his printing office which contained three wooden presses and a small font of French type. A young compositor named Abadia had, untaught, executed the wood-cut of the shield of Spain which appears in the title. The room and presses were much indebted to him for the display of an extempore talent of house and furniture painting,—and the walls bore testimony to his conceptions of the heroic and elegiac, by designs of a tomb for Zumalacarregui.

On my return to Durango, I found that the siege of Bilbao was resolved on, that all the disposable artillery from Oñate and Arlaban was ordered up and on the road thither, and that supplies and munitions from the factories and foundries were concentrating for the attack. I rode to the nearest at Ellorio, to view the iron-foundry works which had been closed in the absence of materials during my previous tour, but the road,



covered with scoria and slag from the furnaces for a mile on the Durango side, indicated the extent of the previous workings, and presented a magnificent iron-bound surface which Mac Adam could have envied but never surpassed. I now found the furnace at work and the men busy in casting cannon balls and shells of every calibre. The latter of thirteen inches and smaller ones of the incendiary genus seemed to be especial favourites. When at full work they could cast 100 balls a day, but were then only accomplishing sixty-four or sixty-eight per diem, their attention being turned to the repairs of various pieces of heavy artillery which required new munnions to enable them to perform active service. They were engaged on five pieces of various calibre from eighteen pounds upwards, and I could not but admire the style in which they accomplished the job. The old stump was chiselled clean off, and a strong tap screwed in, round the square head of which the metal was cast of the requisite dimensions;—thus the old piece was again enabled to take the field with an arm “better than new.” Hoards of cannon-balls which had been cast and pitted for preservation in more dangerous times, were again rolling into daylight; and only waited to have their faces washed in the barrel-machine attached to the water-wheel which blew the foundry bellows, to be enabled to appear

on duty in the batteries. The foundry chamber was rather small for the advantageous use of charcoal which they would otherwise prefer, so coke was used instead. This fuel the workmen usually spoke of as *carbon de piedra Inglesa*, and travellers very easily imbibed the notion that it came from England; but on inquiry how they could possibly obtain it, when, and through what ports, I found that it came through the *puertos* of Reynosa and Oviedo;—the original coal having been raised from bituminous mines in the mountains of the Asturias. It appeared that the cognomen *Inglesa* was added by way of compliment to our antediluvian priority of preparation and use of it,—just as our druggists dignify a similarly carbonaceous-looking article which they prepare for customers troubled with a cold, by the name of “Spanish.”

The Carlists were rather choice in their use of cannon just then, being in possession of many good pieces taken at Plencia, Lequetio and other places within the previous year and a half. They could therefore afford to break up all which were suspected of being radically defective, and recast them into balls and shells, as I found them doing at Ellorio. Having the free range of a great extent of coast and mountainous country, (the scenes of former extensive operations of English, French

and German as well as Spanish warfare,) they are occasionally dragging to light great guns of all ages and sizes; some from the depths of rivers, where they had been abandoned in a hasty passage; some from wrecks on the coast where tradition has preserved the memory of the loss of vessels of force; and some from quiet graves amidst the mountain passes, where Napoleon's convoys had been pounced upon by Guerillas, when the artillery (being so much *impedita* to the light-footed victors) had been spiked and buried on the spot by them. Many of these had lain at rest for generations in the absence of any sufficient inducement to those among whom the stories of "the old wars" still survived, to fish for some and dig for others;—but the Basques and Navarrese are both traditionary and martial races, and when a cause sufficiently good and great once rouses them from their repose, they waken up to some purpose, when all they can do or suffer or remember for its advancement is volunteered forthwith. The foundry at Ellorio had unfortunately no tilt hammer wherewith to break up the clumsy carronades and old long fortress guns, whose honeycombs indicated the propriety of issuing a new edition of the metal; so the peasantry dragged them a couple of leagues further up the mountains of Abadiano above Ermaua, where four foundry forge-mills are to be found on the

banks of the little river Arria, engaged in that omnibus plenitude of occupations which so well entitle Spanish forges to the title of *ferreria*. As I wished to see their fabrication of iron and arms in all its stages, I rode up the hills with no other guide than the thunder of the tilt hammers and my own curiosity, armed only with a few words of Basquense. But these peasants are as obliging as they are industrious, and a child might wander alone through their province with perfect safety.

The Biscayans are indeed a highly intelligent, sociable, and amiable people. They possess all the natural active politeness of the Irish peasantry, without any alloy of servility—the sagacity of the Scotch, without a symptom of its degeneracy into 'cuteness—and the steady self-respect which characterises the upper classes of England, quite free from the leaven of Saxon stupidity. I have seen them frown vengefully when talking, or rather thinking, about the *Christinos*; but I have never yet heard an angry word amongst them,—except, indeed, by a sentinel, towards myself one night, at Durango, when I was very near being shot at; not being aware that any one was challenging me, as I have already narrated. They differ however so much in one material respect from the Irish, that I can scarcely believe the latter have any fair claim to a common origin, (although it is politely conceded by the

Biscayans, and natives of Ireland are by virtue of their birth-right free of the corporation of Bilbao, being entitled to trade, settle and open shop in that capital,—a privilege they do not enjoy in the *soi-disant* liberal metropolis of England), viz. their remarkable sobriety, notwithstanding the abundance of wine and aguardiente in the country. Every where I experienced the greatest consideration and kindness—much more, indeed, than I expected, bearing as I did the inimical name of Englishman, associated as it was to their sad experience with everything ferocious and dastardly. We only appeared on their shores to pillage and destroy,—our only apparent motive—

“The daily shilling which makes warriors tough.”

I could have forgiven them if they hooted me as I rode along; but they are a people of more reflection, discrimination and generosity than Englishmen are inclined to believe; and they showed far more consideration for us than we did for them. In their self-possessed dispassionate conduct they bear a strong resemblance to those native gentlemen the North American Indians, who never allow themselves to betray surprise or vexation, and in this respect the Biscayans stand at the moral antipodes of their neighbours at the other side of the Pyrenees. They may be recognised at once as

men and gentlemen, although clad as the mountain iron-millers were, in little more than long linen shirts reaching to their shoes, to shield them from the sparks. But I was forgetting—the peasantry of Biscay are all noble, with the exception of a trifling number who have immigrated from other provinces since the Moresco wars; and on an enumeration taken in 1835, there were in Biscay 54,000, in Guipuscoa 50,000, in Alava 12,000, and in the kingdom of Navarre 13,000 nobles.

The Navarrese appear to be a mixed race. They are not nearly so well looking, amiable, or intelligent as the Basques, and, although Zumalacarregui preferred making their valleys the seat of war, yet I am assured the Guipuscoans make better soldiers. The Biscayans had not until the last siege of Bilbao, been afforded similar opportunities to distinguish themselves, having only had the Westminster legion to beat at Arlaban, and a few other affairs such as the capture of Bermeo, Guetaria, Plencia and Lequetio to accomplish; but the best leaders have always been elsewhere. They were the first to proclaim Don Carlos, and have ever since been working (as well as fighting) to supply him with arms of all kinds.

I found the artisans of Abadiano as enthusiastic as the rest—fully alive to the importance of the siege and the removal of *Cuartel Real* (the court, or royal

plished so much with such simple machinery. The mountain-stream turns the tilt-hammer and blows a pair of bellows; and such bellows! Each is formed of several cow-hides nailed and clasped together so as to form an enormous leathern air bottle. This is loaded and clinched around with iron plates; and both when set in motion puff and pant and grunt and waddle on the floor like huge scaly crocodiles or dragons of Wantley! One forge had a pair of square-box and piston bellows (not acting like our cylindrical pistons, alone, but as an arrangement for the pressure of loose leathern air bags); however, the dragon's breath blew quite as fiercely, and softened the metal just as well. Scrap-iron, from the armouries at Eibar, Ermua, Placentia, and Elgoibar, is also sent to these forges,—stamped together, heated, and then hammered in a twinkling into spades or frying-pans. The workmen bore the fire like salamanders; while the contrast between their grim and savage appearance as well as their savage treatment of themselves, and their kind attention to the stranger, was so striking as to excite my attention continually. I found myself learning Basquense every day through the mere pleasure of chatting with these people,—a language which must puzzle a Somersetshire man. He would get on rather slowly if obliged to say “Ea” when he meant “No.”

I also visited the royal gunpowder mill and magazine near Tolosa, where I was not a little amused at the proceedings of the *Factiosos*. It is a true saying that it must be a good workman who can get through his task without tools, and there I saw something closely approaching to an illustration which interested me exceedingly. The skeleton of an old burnt-out flour-mill on the bank of the little river Lizara had been refitted in a style of economy and absence of ornament that would have charmed the heart of Joe Hume to behold. The whole business of refining, grinding, pounding, mixing and stamping was carried on in three small rooms on the ground floor, with the aid of a very primitive apparatus. The crystallization of the nitre from the impure solution was accomplished in wooden troughs, in the most sultry weather, without even the presence of a slip of lead as a starting point. The purified salt was pounded with wooden mallets, then dried in the air and reduced to powder by a hand-quern. The pine charcoal (burnt in the mountains by adepts who never heard of Doctor Watson, the late Bishop of Llandaff, or his cast-iron cylinders) was also pounded, sifted and mixed by hand. The subsequent operations of grinding and stamping the triple mixture were performed by the assistance of the river Lizara; while the concluding ones of breaking up, sifting, sorting and drying,



—or perhaps they have some “new system,” like Dr. O’Toole’s, on which they leave out the bursting charge altogether? But there are the shells, and here is the fact of their preservation!

As I saw the numerous boxes of cartridges packed up and sent off from the magazines to the army of the coast frontier, and then looked back on the little mill and its rude manipulations, I felt myself soliloquising:—“These people must succeed, for their energy and industry increase with every danger and difficulty. They have got over the great impediment that stopped Zumalacarregui on his march to Madrid after he had beaten Valdes. They have now powder at command; and while they can thus create it among sticks and stones and sheets in the open air, they can never be conquered. They are no longer obliged to pay six times the value of it to France. Each mill is a mint to them, and is better than a silver mine, for it enables them to grind out their own independence. Each powder-monkey too holds up his head like a captain of artillery, and seems to feel as he thumps the charcoal, that he is charging a battery which may demolish a whole battalion of Christinos. Yes! such a people must succeed!”

The conduct of the peasantry, whether engaged in field in camp or in factory, like those just men-

tioned, was throughout my tour an object of especial interest to me. On their proceedings, in fact, the issue of this eventful struggle depends. Whilst they are well affected, active, industrious and confident, the King cannot lose his cause,—even if every fortress were in the hands of Queen Christina and her Algerine and Westminster allies. If they sink into apathy or even indifference, it is gone. This is the simple view of the case which all my experience tended to confirm, which rendered each sun-burnt muleteer and *paysano* that I met on the road-side, a very respectable and influential personage in my eyes, and awakened my earnest attention to the aggregate of their sayings and doings, habits, customs, and even amusements. Warlike as they are, I was surprised to find so few martial sports amongst them. They have no boxing matches, single-stick combats, fencing or target shooting; but they are not the less in love with warfare and earnest in its exercise. Thus when the cannonades at the lines of St. Sebastian and Passages are heard through Guipuscoa, protecting sal- lies of the garrisons, the *voluntarios* cannot remain quietly working in a field, but snatch up their muskets, and scamper over the hills for miles “just to have a few shots at the Christinos,” which they discharge with right good will, and sleep all the sounder for on their return. There is, however, a

species of martial gymnastic exercise prevailing throughout the Basque provinces, very striking to English eyes, and so influential in its results in the development of combative and other valuable national propensities, that I shall give my readers a description thereof, just as it occurred under my own eyes in the Plaza of the little village of Yurreta, within half a mile of Durango.

At four o'clock on Sunday afternoon, the Alcalde of the village struck his silver-headed javelin into the ground at one corner of the little green Plaza in front of the church, and immediately a drummer accompanied by another instrumental performer bearing a pipe and tabor, appeared on the scene and commenced a slow martial movement, in which the time was accented very imposingly. The Alcalde himself was an imposing personage, tall, thin and sedate, adorned with a conical brown night-cap turned up with black velvet, a loose brown spencer which would have held another Alcalde, brown knee-breeches and black worsted stocking. The Alguazil who supported him by sitting beside him for three hours, was on the contrary, a fat, short, talkative authority. I never saw such a contrast, except in the sketches of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. The javelin was a very antique affair about five feet long, with a double arrow head, the section of which would form a cross like what would result from two

of Robin Hood's or the Douglas's shots in a target, where

"The second split the first in twain."

The music struck up, and crowds of men, women, and children, poured into the Plaza, an irregular pentagon, (or quærangle) environed with houses adorned with balconies and a grand raised portico which extended the length of the church. These were soon filled with the beauty and fashion of the court and its vicinity, who thought it more suitable to their sex or age or dignity to look on, than to take an active part in the athletic evolutions which the peasantry were about to engage in. Groups of officers and civilians, secretaries, chamberlains, and the whole *ayuntamiento* loitered on the sod below as if to brave the dangers of the scene, or gallantly conversed with the ladies in the balconies calming their fears and assuring them it was not half so dangerous or cruel as a bull-bait, &c. A dense crowd of young peasant soldiers stood in one angle of the Plaza, apparently in expectation of opponents of some kind; the barriers were withdrawn from the stone pillars at each angle, and the centre of the arena was thrown open for combat.

The drum and tabor (I beg their pardon for this delay) repeated their point of war emphatically; and the first demonstration of active operations was made by a long file of young women who marched

upon the green hand-in-hand, the file leader acting as fogle-woman, and conducting her band of heroines with a kind of saltatory motion resembling that which Le Brun and others have preserved to us in their pictorial descriptions of the tactics of the Priestesses of Bacchus and Cybele. At times it was nearly identical with the inspired movement of Orpheus, depicted in Barry's famous series of paintings which adorn the chief saloon of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi, and which their *catalogue raisonné* justly terms "an attitude of singular energy." As the line of rustic beauty swept round the Plaza, I could almost imagine that I beheld the maidens of Sparta going through their warlike exercises and daring their lovers to the combat. They were clad all in strict national uniform,—neat black shoes, snow-white stockings, rather short petticoats, small shawls of various colours, and white pocket handkerchiefs; but no caps, hats, bonnets or artificial head-dress of any kind, the hair being universally gathered backward and plaited in one or two tails, which hung down at full length behind, and switched about most cavalierly. After a few circumvolutions of these Spartan damsels in the Plaza, the crowd of men who stood in close column evinced a degree of restlessness to accept the challenge of the parading heroines. *Voluntarios* started out one after another

and broke into the line, seizing an opponent with each hand till all were fairly engaged and a marching file of double length attained, in which so equally were the parties matched that it was a difficult point to predict to whom the victory would fall. The combined yet rival forces now made another solemn perambulation to the same measure ; when the Alcalde, apparently quite satisfied that a firm line of battle was formed and all ready for action, gave a signal to the little band with his javelin, when instantly the drum and tabor struck up a brisk quick step which set the whole string of life (or lives) whirling with fearful rapidity round a young ash tree in the centre. Now the engagement began in earnest, and the secret of the tactics, acted on by the "natural born enemies" on the plain, began to develope itself.

It would be difficult to explain the matter accurately without diagrams, elevations and prostrations ; so, being confined to definitions in the absence of any known descriptive terms, I can only say that the terms of combat observed by each, with respect to the two enemies between which he or she happened to be placed, was to hold fast by each other's hands, to keep moving in the whirlpool *pas de charge*, and at the same time to inflict as many sound blows as possible. The gracefulness and energy with which this manoeuvre was executed

was truly edifying to a stranger like me, who really was not aware that the human frame possessed such flexibility and endurance. Each pair of gladiators whirled their grasped hands in unison as if about to discharge a stone from a sling; and, having attained the needful velocity, flung them forward, —at the same moment wheeling about in opposite directions and hurling themselves at each other with a *suaviter in modo et fortiter in re* that could not fail to make a reciprocal impression. “We are not stocks and stones,” said *Corporal Trim*.

“Hearts are not flint, yet flint is rent;  
Hearts are not steel, yet steel is bent.” &c.

Each hero and heroine was reciprocally placed between two enemies of the opposite sex, and obliged in turn to encounter both. All were at war with their neighbours in turn, and each proximate couple became at every opportunity

“A pair of rustic foes, who sought renown,  
While dancing round to bump each other down;”

as Goldsmith would have sung if he had travelled to the Basque provinces.

But, hark—the tune is changed; the fife and tabor have struck up a quicker and livelier strain, —the drum beats time more loudly and imperatively. All the links of the immense circle are severed in an instant; the combatants throw

aloft their hands, and whirl about separately like mad! 'Tis now

“—— the mirth and fun grow fast and furious.”

Some face their partners sternly in a jig, or, melting into a waltz, cruise about the Plaza at random, like Herschell's double stars in free space, deranging other systems and set-tos with a whisk of their tail which cuts like a lash in a rapid twirl, and whips fire out of Spanish eyes in a twinkling.

“Others dance in a round, cutting capers and ramping—

A mercy the ground did not burst with their stamping.”

What shouts of merriment! The young ash tree is shaking with laughter to its very roots, and all its leaves are dancing sympathetically in the whirlwind. There's one tall fellow cutting a horn-pipe through the crowd and using his knees—That's not fair—call the Alcalde! The dumpy girl replies with her broad shoulder! All's right again. See the poor little man escaping from that amazon—a triton of the minnows! The child crosses his path and upsets him! There goes my pretty patrona and her grandmother, careering in their waltz like a double shot against the *Commandante de armas*, and see the cigar is shot out of his lips! What excellent time they keep with their fingers: 'Tis a pity they have not castanets to mark it more merrily. How many hundreds in motion! The



vortex makes my head reel with the attempt to reckon. See a dozen of the King's *garde du corps* swept into the centre of the whirlpool. The cavaliers can't waltz for their spurs, and the women are charging them like Cossacks and Pandours. There's a young officer carried off in the current! The rest hold on by the ash tree and each other, till it is nearly uprooted! The lasses will next storm the steps of the sanctuary!

The Alcalde who "saw the madness rise" gave a sign to the piper—

" And while they heaven and earth defied,  
Changed his hand and checked their pride."

The slow movement was recommenced, the loud mirth of the crowd was subdued, the ball opened with the same solemn movement as at first, with the addition of a file of male gladiators, who marched in separately, preceded by a very expert fugleman. By this time additional crowds had strolled down from Durango, attracted by the laughter that echoed from the rocks, till there were as many spectators as performers grouped around the Plaza, although the King's band was performing in the town, and more courtly waltzing was in progress before the windows of the Palacio. Several officers of the court and army—Spanish, French, British, German, Italian and Portuguese—stood near, cavalierly discussing the personal points and

merits of the light-hearted skirmishers, and the national advantages of such a weekly parade, affording as it did, such excellent practical opportunities to the *voluntarios* of judging correctly of the steadiness or levity, the substance or poverty, the firmness or feebleness of understanding, and the native capacity or littleness of their comrades, before they committed themselves by enlisting for life in their company. One of the party was entering into a dissertation on the probability of the custom having been derived through the Phœnicians from the Babylonians, who, according to Herodotus, were in the habit of holding reviews and making exhibitions with similarly instructive designs and beneficial results, when he and his speculations were both upset by an unexpected illustration. The piper had been playing his third air (the Saturnalian,) unheeded by the historian, and a string of feminine examples, rushing by, threw him on his hands and knees. Other trains of flying artillery and light chasseurs equally emulous of conquest, now scoured the plain in all directions, and *los Senores oficiales* received no quarter, although they shifted their quarters continually, and dexterously evaded scores of shocks; still subdivisions of laughing girls came charging by, their white handkerchiefs flying like lance pennons, but not one held out as a flag of truce.

At length, with the sagacity of old tacticians, the officers formed into a hollow square, at the corner of which a brigadier-general had the hardihood to present himself something in advance as a volunteer-bastion ; but the first troop which galloped by, carried him away with the same ease that an acre of marmots would overrun a wild bull. The square was evidently weak and unsteady from the curiosity of those within, to see how the day went without. This was quickly perceived by the assailants, and its total demolition ensued. A plump yet active heroine (worthy to have been the wife of King Codrus or Monsieur Arcole) danced out of the ranks, and devoted herself to the task of breaking into the hollow square on the principle of a bombshell. Wheeling back to gain sufficient impetus in the onset, she collected all her energies, and then dashed forward in the style so happily described by Scott in his ‘ Lady of the Lake ’ (but the reader must substitute cambric handkerchief for “broad-sword”) in the combat in the Trosacs where

“ With wave-like crest of tawny foam  
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come ;—  
Above the tide each broad-sword bright,  
Was brandishing like beam of light,  
Each targe was dark below.  
And with the ocean’s mighty swing,  
When heaving to the tempest’s wing,  
They hurled them on the foe ! ”

Thus did this disinterested Basque heroine, and it was truly surprising to witness the sensation she created among chiefs and nobles—scattering heroes of a hundred fights, adorned and protected as they were by ribbons of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic, at their button-holes. Taught by experience, they now formed in solid column, and thus defied all further attacks of either flying or heavy artillery, till the shades of evening fell, when the sage Alcalde (at the instigation of the Alguazil, who appeared to be viceroy over him) plucked his javelin out of the ground and marched gravely round the ash-tree, whereupon the drum and tabor ceased their labours, and the enchantment being ended, every one walked leisurely home.

“All this is nothing,” said a friend who had brought me to the scene, “compared with what I saw at Salinas just a fortnight since, when escorting the Court hither. There was an immense crowd on the green, and the waltzing and bumping went on with proportional spirit; but there was a leader of the men’s file who seemed to be inspired with the sentiment of the first Vestris, ‘*Je suis le Dieu de la danse*,’ and performed *à merveille*! He was a peasant of the better class, with silver tassel buttons on his vest, and a scarlet sash round his waist. His evolutions were distinguished by such art and science, compass and drollery, that every

eye in the balconies followed him;—even the Alcalde forgot in his admiration to change the movement. When this fellow was tired of exhibiting his airs and graces according to rule, he took to the tipsy style,—transforming himself into such a beast that the effect was irresistible, and everybody danced delighted around him alone. A heavy shower had fallen in the morning, and the slippery ground favoured his evolutions admirably. He skaited as if he was floundering on a piece of ice, and then fell headlong amongst the crowd, who screamed as he rose, covered with picturesque patches of mud. At length he slipped for forty yards without being able to get fairly on his feet; and when I last saw him, was continuing to slip down hill along the village green, followed by the music and the multitude of admiring spectators; the Alcalde himself bringing up the rear to recal them to a sense of dignity and etiquette; but in vain. As long as I staid in the empty Plaza to listen, the fife and drum were heard following in full play, while continuous shouts proclaimed the successful progress of the ballet-master.”

Returning at dusk with the happy multitude to Durango, I expected to have witnessed some further amusement; but, no ! the scene was neither English or Irish ; there was no drinking, no quarrelling ; the game of romps had begun and ended

with the Alcalde, the javelin, and the music. The license of the *Culada* was past, the etiquette of promenade was resumed, and all was Spanish courtesy and gravity again, excepting the eyes of the women, which both gentle and simple, keep dancing day and night with a vivacity that laughs at all control, and far exceeds the power of either Padre or Alcalde to manage or modify. The lady spectators in the church, arcade, and balconies, I must do them the justice to say, did not make any exhibitions of prudery, but laughed and waltzed (with their eyes) as much as the peasant girls did in *propria personæ* in the Plaza below. They live in a primitive Arcadia of their own and still enjoy some of the natural pleasures derived from the golden age of innocence and ignorance, perpetuated as it is by the religious observance of customs stronger than laws and older than history. It would have been refined cruelty to have disturbed their happiness by the introduction of any exotic grafts of the tree of knowledge of good and evil manners, as it is cultivated in our chilly climate. Everything in the Biscayan mountains is simple, real, native—can be understood and calculated on with certainty; and, as far as I have seen, any imitation of foreign habits would in most cases alter the natural character of the Basques very much for the worse. As it is, at every turn a stranger finds something to

admire. A young soldier at the ball had a large piece of chalk kicked out of his pocket by a flourishing pirouette of a partner in the Saturnalian movement. Its appearance was welcomed with a loud huzza, and I turned to an officer for an explanation. "Oh," said he, "that fellow's a literary character in his way. He's generally on duty blockading Bilbao, and as soon as the cowardly Christinos withdraw their advanced guard within the walls for the night, he and half a dozen wags will follow and write some moral or political abuse of the Queen on the town gates. He always carries some chalk for Christina on the frontiers."

## CHAPTER X.

THE order for the second siege of Bilbao having been given, troops and artillery were seen moving thither from all available sources, and concentrating at Zornosa, nine English miles and three-quarters from that town on the Durango-road. Thither Villa Real went on the 21st October to take the command of operations. Count Casa-Eguia, who occasionally suffered severely from the gout, and had since the commencement of this movement been the subject of a fresh attack, did not leave Durango, but Simon de la Torre was actively engaged in the blockade. This siege was a much more serious undertaking than that which the Carlists carried on under the command of Zumalacarregui in June, 1835. They were then in possession of all the heights around the city, and within half-musket shot of the walls. Subsequently the Christinos occupied all the surround-



cottages, churches, convents and palaces, through which winds a river fantastically serpentine, one hour full and shining to the brim, anon sinking to a shallow ripple. In the midst lies "the most noble town," the capital of Biscay—its clustering steeples grouped on either bank, reposing in its strength and grandeur, environed by shady prados, broad quays, formidable forts, and enclosing within its ample lines lesser hills and slopes of striking verdure.

I found that during the night, General Villa Real had caused a mortar battery to be constructed above the Church of Begonia, at the side of a little hill which sheltered it from the fire of two batteries in the possession of the garrison outside the town to the south-westward, built on a double hill in very commanding positions overlooking the bridge and road to Durango. These Christino forts are named the higher and lower Morro ; the Carlist battery, the Rotura de Begonia. Here the new brass thirteen-inch mortar lately cast at Oñate, and two brass seven inch howitzers, were placed, under the command of Brigadier Cuello. Its fire was opened on the town soon after sunrise, and continued without intermission till six o'clock in the evening, when a change was made in the projectiles employed. Sixty-eight large shells and 136 grenades were thrown during the day, of which

only one fell short. They were directed not only against the forts, but amongst the houses, and as the town lay displayed like a map at our feet, the individual building was immediately recognised without the aid of a telescope by the cloud of smoke and dust that rose with the explosion, while the crowds who covered the heights declared the name of the street, and frequently that of the Urbano who occupied it. The great bell of the convent Santiago was struck by a sentinel as the discharge took place—twice for a grenade, and thrice for a bombshell. Great care was obviously bestowed on this branch of the defensive operations within, for, although heavy smoke and frequent flames attended the explosions, they soon disappeared, and only a thin vapour arose to mark the shattered roof. Many of the houses were uninhabited and their furniture removed in expectation of the long-threatened attack,—few or none remaining but Urbanos who were compromised with the Christinos. Numbers of houses around, in the beautiful valleys of the rivers Nervion and Ansa, were similarly deserted; for the cannons of the Christino forts were sweeping their banks, and tearing the summits of the San Domingo hills which were crowded with soldiers and peasantry rejoicing in the bombardment,—eager to ascertain the damage inflicted, without caring for the personal hazard.

The whole eastern line of the town forts was actively engaged in addition to the two forts of Morro, and that of Miravalles, on the south. The principal stations in the intrenched line around the town are,—the forts of Larrinaga, Del Circo, (including the Campo Santo,) La Parra (*Anglice* The Trellice,) and Mallona. They were each trying their practice against the new Carlist battery—the distant ones, outside the town, with shells alone; those in the lines adjacent with shot also; but not a single Carlist was hurt all day! Mallona was pretty well occupied on its own account in replying to the attacks of two or three companies of infantry, stationed at the northern and lowest point of the city, sheltered by some detached houses adjacent to the convent of St. Augustin. The latter was strongly fortified for musketry. Three others were fortified with cannon, in commanding situations; fort Banderas also is on a considerable elevation, but it, as well as the four outlying convents were too distant to do anything effective for the relief of the town.

The Carlist infantry were indefatigable in the annoyance of fort Mallona, which in return sent its twenty-four and thirty-two pounders through and through the houses that sheltered them; but scarcely was the flash out of the cannon when the fire of the sharp-shooters was returned through

the same embrasure. La Parra and Fort del Circo are next lowest on the line, and as they were inconveniently circumstanced for replying to the Carlist sharp-shooters at the points they had taken up, they were amusing themselves by firing at all who appeared on the hills, especially at the General and his staff who were walking with most provoking nonchalance full in their view along the ridge of St. Domingo; while the other officers and amateurs with telescopes, were seated on the grass here and there, watching the progress of the shot and shells with intense interest, and altogether insensible to the possible effect on themselves, except in connection with the art of gunnery. They appeared to have a great contempt for the Christino artillerymen, and when La Parra or Del Circo blazed at them, observed with the most amusing naïveté, "*Viene aqui !*" (it's coming here !) Their aim was indeed very bad all day, the balls whistling over our heads, —some going clear over the mountain beside, and, such was the influence of example, that I sat or walked about with the various parties of pleasure on those interesting heights under the fire of the Christino batteries from sun-rise to sun-set, —contrary to all the prudential considerations and resolutions "in such cases made and provided ;" but the view of the grand panorama below and around

was so magnificent and the scenes transacting so striking and eventful, I could scarcely withdraw my eyes from them. On the side of the town the cannonade was continuous, aided by the forts behind, and a gun-boat in the river which joined in demolishing the houses that protected the sharp-shooters; but their reaction effected nothing further. Not a single Carlist was killed or wounded anywhere all day, though the discharge of shells against their battery was incessant. At every shot loud shouts were set up by the gunners and the battalion that guarded it; if the shell fell near, of defiance; if distant of derision. I never saw merrier men.

On the other side of the hills, (more distant from the besieged,) all was active preparation. The roads were covered with mules and oxen dragging up trains of artillery and an endless string of *carros* with ammunition and provisions from the Munguia side, invisible to the high Christino forts of Morro, which fired at every mule that appeared on the Durango road. The remainder of the army was preparing its bivouac, setting fire to heath and furze to dry and warm the earth, while fort Del Circo was taking cognizance of their rude style of bed-making, by firing over the hills at the smoke. A division of the Foreign Legion were in especial high spirits, having been accepted as volunteers to

mount the breach—joking with their acquaintances on the opportunity of completing their wardrobe for the winter in Bilbao. On the road might be seen a family party escaping from Deusto or Olaveaga by a circuitous route; the Señora wearing a bonnet, and seated in a saddle-chair; the latter as familiar to the eyes of the Biscayan mountaineers as the head-gear is strange.

Amongst the peasant drivers were many women who followed the fortunes of their husbands or fathers, and walked up to the summit line to view the war below as eagerly as the idle soldiers themselves. The latter now and then brought up to the General's hut the 24 pound shots which had flown over the hill from our attentive friend Del Circo. Deserters from the Christino lines of Navarre were continually arriving. Eighteen lancers, fully armed and well mounted, escaped from their Foreign Legion, presented themselves to the General during the first day. Cheering sights and sounds were seen and heard everywhere. On the town side, some companies were descending the heights in the face of the cannonade, to relieve their fatigued comrades in the sharp-shooting neighbourhood of St. Augustin and get possession of the convent if possible. The valley re-echoed with their shouts as they let the cannoniers hear how little they cared about them, inter-

of war; but the spectacle was so exciting that it enchainned the attention hour after hour.

At eight o'clock, P.M. the French Consul resident in the town (M. Lafitte) sent out a flag of truce with a letter to demand permission for several subjects of France then in Bilbao to proceed by the river to Portugalete where a steam-boat awaited them; the Carlists having cut off all intercourse with the sea, by taking possession of the river fort adjoining the Campo Valentino (La Salve) the day before, where there were stationed two pieces of cannon, one of 8lbs. the other of 4lbs. calibre. Even the gun-boat was afraid to attempt the passage, with wind and tide in her favour. In reply the messenger was informed that General Villa Real had not the honour of any official acquaintance with such a personage as the French Consul; and this being the first intimation he had received of any authority in Bilbao who had any claim to dictate or demand in the camp of Don Carlos, he begged leave to decline entering into any official correspondence with him. In short, the Consul of France did not recognise him, and he would not recognise the Consul. The bearer of the *Drap Tricolor* was however informed that there would be no difficulty in granting permission for the said citizens of France to proceed to their own country through the Carlist territories by Irun,

as Don Carlos has no quarrel with Frenchmen; but as the Bilbao ambassador had seen the Carlist batteries, he was requested to await the result on the heights, while the answer was sent back by a peasant. It was suspected that among the "citizens of France," anxious to proceed home by Portugaleta, were some who would make a point to put into St. Sebastian, and inform General Evans and his friends of every thing they knew, and all that General San Miguel might wish to communicate. Nothing resulted from this permission, and I was subsequently informed, that those who might have wished to depart through the Carlist camp, were effectually deterred by their knowledge of the very great probability that the moment they were outside the walls, a shower of Christino bullets would cut short their progress.

Having obtained a few hours' sleep in a peasant's cottage on the heights, I was on the ground again before daylight on the morning of the 26th, to witness the effects of the incendiary shells; but although the night was beautifully calm, nothing was discernible in the town except a dense fog of smoke. They had been reserved for projection in the dark, that the effect might be more strikingly terrific in the eyes of the Urbanos. Their flight and descent were indeed very grand, but the anticipated result of the combustion was not at all verified. The



Urbanos and Garrison were doubtless very active in quenching whatever flames broke out, but it also appeared that the inventor had been too sanguine and premature in celebrating their virtues, and that too little care had been taken by his superiors in ascertaining their actual powers before bringing them to the siege. The effect of the large bomb was tremendous, but the Urbanos were indefatigable. Fifteen inhabitants who effected their escape over night were received by General Villa Real with the considerate kindness which distinguished him, and were provided with quarters till the termination of the siege, when they were set at liberty. They declared that the city was already half ruined, that the garrison had no desire to sacrifice themselves for either Queen or Constitution, and would have endeavoured to have made terms during the night, if the Urbanos had not kept up their spirits by exhortations, example,

<sup>1</sup> M. Lizoire, a French Engineer officer, who constructed these incendiary shells, had been raised to the rank of Colonel by the Carlists, on account of their faith in his pyrotechnic abilities; but on the failure of his five-fold fire-ball, he fell out of favour with the authorities, and being much annoyed by the soubriquet of "*tout terrasser*," (which he had himself originated by his incessant destructive assurances to prostrate and level every thing with his projectiles,) quitted the service shortly after the relief of Bilbao at Christmas. Letters from the Secretary at War in Durango, addressed "Colonel Lizoire," have been returned by the Postmasters, who knew no such a person; but when sent back re-directed to "*Monsieur Tout-terrasser*," they were delivered at once.

promises, wine, brandy, bravados—and finally a little money.

Two new batteries in the valley had been completed during the night, and the fire was commenced (as soon as the dawn rendered the parapet and embrasures distinctly visible) by that placed in front of Fort Malona. This battery was composed of a thirty-six-pounder, a sixteen-pounder, an eight-pounder and a seven-inch howitzer. Its efforts were directed both against the fort and the convent, which latter was filled with sharp-shooters who kept up a brisk fire against the Carlist infantry and artillery. At eight o'clock the second battery opened its fire on the town. It consisted of two guns of twenty-four pounds, one of sixteen pounds and a carronade of twenty-four pounds. It lay closely under the heights of St. Domingo, on the side of Ulibarri. The two twenty-four pounders were fired together, and produced a great sensation as they rattled through the forts. It was further from the town than that which was designed for effecting the main breach, but it had a better view and a wider selection of objects, and a tearing effect on La Parra. During their erection at night only a single man was wounded seriously. His litter passed us before day-break on his way to the hospital at Zamudio, about three miles off. This was the only person yet hurt by the Christino gunners; but we could

perceive that they were improving in their aim : several times during the morning of the 26th, they scattered the General's staff on the ridge of St. Domingo, the wind of the balls whipping off caps and giving their owners a bodily shake in passing. One lodged in the face of the hill, just over my left shoulder ; but nobody was hurt, although the hills far and near were covered with the encampment ; if I may be permitted to apply the term to a bivouac which did not exhibit a second hut or a single yard of canvas.

At ten o'clock in the morning we could observe from the heights, that somebody had fallen in the mortar battery on the Rotura de Begoña, and we heard with grief that the Brigadier Cuello had been killed. He was deeply regretted, both as a soldier and a man of the most amiable disposition and gentlemanly conduct. He was commandant-general of the artillery of Navarre, and had distinguished himself for skill and bravery during the late war in Portugal, in his capacity of General of artillery of the forces of Dom Miguel. Since he entered the service of Don Carlos, he had proved his ability by the battery that took the fort of Zubiri, in Navarre, where, having effected a breach, he stormed the place with his own artilleros, and was the third who entered at the assault. His death was caused by his stepping out of the Rotura, to watch the effect of a shell directed

against the heavy guns in Fort Larrinaga, (whose position was such as to sweep the line of road by which the ammunition came to the mortar battery), when the response, a chance shot, which he had gone into the way of, killed him on the spot, the first slain in the camp ! I had enjoyed the pleasure of his society whilst at Estella, and experienced a degree of attention and kindness on his part, which, though a perfect stranger to Navarre, had made me feel quite at home in his society, and which I was conscious flowed entirely from the exuberant goodness of heart he was endowed with<sup>1</sup>. He was succeeded in the command of the battery by Captain Plaza, assisted by Captain D'Erhouart. At noon, the General of artillery, Don Juan Montenegro was borne out of the breaching battery, wounded by a cannon ball in the left arm: another brave man whom I had in a short acquaintance learned to admire and esteem. The Carlist generals have no sinecure ! So much is to be done, and with so little means, that it is indispensable they put their own hands to the work, or see it done under their own eyes. Two of the most experienced men in the ordnance department were now *hors de combat*, and the batteries must have worked under great

<sup>1</sup> His widow has been allowed a pension allotted the rank of *Mariscal de Campo*, a grade equivalent to our Major-General.

disadvantages. In that before St. Augustin, Captain Rochefoucault commanded, and was every moment widening the breach at Fort Mallona. But he and his men were severely exposed to heavy shot, shells and musketry; the latter from the convent which had been filled with sharp-shooters for his annoyance. The other battery of Ulibarri was worked by Colonel Urrutia and Captain Trovo.

The Rotura de Begoña had slackened its fire in the absence of a good supply of large shells, and probably the death of poor Cuello also interfered with their arrangements, but they soon began to pour forth large and small briskly again. The town forts replied with great energy, but no additional effect, except on the lower side where they sent a number of shells into a large building on the bank of the river, consisting of two houses, named the Casa de Goyerri, and Casa de Endorica, to deprive the Carlist infantry of so much shelter in their attacks on the convent. The latter driven out, joined in setting them on fire. At half-past five P.M. these two houses were in flames, and soon shed a dangerous light on the breaching battery, its protecting infantry, and the road leading from the heights by which the Carlist cannon arrived, and by which ammunition might otherwise have been sent in safety. Several of Captain Rochefoucault's artillery-men fell, or were obliged to leave the bat-

tery severely wounded by the bursting shells. He was however battering Fort Mallona to dust, and the breach was at that hour pronounced practicable (although the ascent of the bank to arrive at it is a task for a man with both hands at liberty,) whereupon the third provisional battalion of Castile sent a request to the General to be allowed to share with *les étrangères* the dangers and glories of the assault. The artilleros of Mallona were seen anxiously trying to repair the breach with sand bags as fast as it was made, but in vain.

At six in the evening, orders were given for the assault. The volunteers prepared for the attack, and descended the hills in the dusk to take up a position before Fort Mallona, under the command of Baron de Los Valles who volunteered to lead the storming party. It consisted of three companies and a half (about 150 men) of the Foreign Legion, and double that number of the Provisional battalion of Castile. Five companies had been sent, under Don Manuel Basterra, (Ayudante to General Villa Real,) to make a diversion on the left against the convent of Begoña and also against the town at the side of Fort Larrinaga. The first, fifth, and sixth battalion of Biscay, were ordered to be in readiness to support the storming party. General Guergue, who commanded the line, also descended the heights to see the reinforcements

properly disposed. It was a serious undertaking, for there were within the walls a regiment of 800 Urbanos deeply compromised by the part they had taken against their countrymen in the two sieges. It was known they would fight like devils. Next 150 Peseteros, desperadoes of the first blood, and lastly, five battalions of the line, of between 800 and 900 men each, say 5000 men including the little garrisons in the outlying forts.

After the departure of the storming party I continued sitting on the hill with the General and his staff,—all watching with deep anxiety the progress of events in the valley. The moon did not rise, and a dense dew-mist chilled the smoke of the cannonade till it fell like a sheet on the town, the river and the fields at the base of St. Domingo. Nothing was heard or seen till half-past seven, except the rushing flight of shells and the roar of the Carlist breaching cannonade against fort Mal-lona and its neighbour La Parra. (The former when I last saw it, before dusk, was one ruin,—its shattered ordnance lying silent and exposed to view; but it stood like a promontory, the lowest point in the chain of forts,—merely connected by a narrow passage along the line of defence, which was easily cut off; and so might be rendered useless to a foe who succeeded in storming it. The Christino workmen were all day

seen from the heights busy incessantly behind this wall, repairing and reconstructing, evidently expecting the attack by assault.) At half-past seven the smoke partially cleared away, and flashes of musketry on the extreme right, briskly answered from the town, told us that the deceptive attack had commenced. This ceased, and in a few minutes another fire at the distant point of Larrinaga on the left commenced, with shouts of "*Viva Carlos Quinto!*" "*Ariba! asalta!*" (Up to the assault!)—answered from the church of Begoña by musketry and from the town by light balls and grape-shot in addition to the fusillade of the Urbanos. The shells from the distant forts of Morro and Miravalles added to the grandeur of the scene. These distracting attacks were renewed on different points till forty minutes past ten, when a brilliant fusillade, in the direction of the little fort of La Parra, revealed to us that the assault had commenced in earnest, and that the storming party was making its grand attempt to enter by the breach. Thither rushed the garrison, and soon the bastion was illuminated by darting fires up and down, which plainly told that the assailants and defenders were in conflict—fosse and parapet. The five companies again approached the town, and threw in their quota of fire and "*vivas*," till the line was brilliant at every angle and all the forts and ramparts at our side were



brightly developed. But it was at the point La Parra, that the quick crossing and at last meeting fires clearly indicated that the foreign legionaries and the provisionals of Castile were engaged in the assault; so the crowd on the heights eagerly concentrated all their powers of sight and hearing to ascertain their progress. Soon the *vivas* for "*Carlos Quinto!*" redoubled; the flashes stretched towards the town and gleamed up in massive glow with dark square spaces below and between; while strange hollow echoes came softened to our ears, and the fiery showers of grape-shot were seen no more at any part of the rampart. Up to this period the Carlist batteries had continued to throw shot and shells, adding to the smoke that rose from the heavy fusillade, till at last we could distinguish nothing further, except that the firing was within the walls. After the sharp contest of musketry at La Parra had continued till near half-past eleven, it ceased at once, and after a burst of loud and triumphant "*vivas*," a dead silence prevailed on every side, which left us in the greatest uncertainty. A soldier now arrived, who brought the gratifying intelligence that the assailants had entered and taken possession of the town; —but he had seen nothing of the troops to support them. A second arrival, a lancer, came to confirm the triumph of the storming party; they had

carried their point, despite of all opposition, and he had heard their cheers within La Parra; but he also knew nothing of the reinforcements. *Ayudantes de Campo* were dispatched to every quarter to learn the cause of delay and to hasten the concerted movement. Lord Ranelagh and Count Valdeck who had been down to the spot to watch the result, at length brought intelligence of the reverse that had occurred. The storming party in the absence of support at the decisive moment, had been obliged to retire after performing prodigies of valour. The Urbanos, to do them justice, had fought like brave men who had every thing to lose, and who were not in the least intimidated by the bombardment. During the attack they exchanged some very bad language with their assailants across the fosse, which could be plainly heard on the hills, accompanied by their singular war-hoop—half-laugh half-shout. “Hoo! hoo! hoo-o-o!” which goes further, and expresses more of lively defiance and sarcastic triumph than anything of the kind I ever heard, except at an Irish fair. These shouts, the cries of the wounded which rose amidst the whizzing and singing of balls and bullets of all sizes, the rush of shells, grenades and fire-balls, formed an orchestra of discord that I shall never forget. Seated upon the heights of St. Domingo, we occupied, as it were, the uppermost bench of an amphitheatre where

every sharp sound rose to us from the valley with startling precision. It was quite obvious whether a bullet had struck or continued its way, whistling as it went, till its force was spent. A number of other phenomena of sight and sound, which by day escaped us, also struck on our senses with singular distinctness.

Next morning I learned the particulars of the assault, which were briefly as follows:—the storming party by some mistake lost their guide in the dark and proceeded till they came to a ravine in front of La Parra, instead of fort Mallona (where the first and great breach was made, and whither they had been ordered to go,)—which lay more to their right. There they arrived at half-past seven, unseen by the enemy, excessively fatigued by the fascines they carried, weighing from four to six arabas (from 1 cwt. to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cwt.) ; and exposed at every ascent of the uneven ground to the cross-fires of forts and batteries. Here they kept quiet and well concealed, resting for three hours, which indeed they required after their fatiguing march over very steep and broken grounds, unable to avail themselves of the roads which would have smoothed their way. The men were, however, in high spirits at the idea of the glory of taking the capital of Biscay from the Christinos, and in the haste of the descent, even left their brandy behind.

At half-past ten o'clock they moved forward to the assault, while the Urbanos were occupied by the feints made by Don Manuel Basterra on the other points. However, the guard of La Parra, (kept on the *qui vive* by the previous false attacks on different points,) caught sight of the force advancing to the true one, and poured in a heavy fire on them ere they could approach the fosse. Those who carried the fascines threw them down on the spot, and, with the instinct of self-preservation, took to their arms, blazed away at the garrison, and finally leaped the ditch or scrambled into breach and embrasure as best they could—the fascines being two or three perches off. The assault and entry were made with great gallantry, amidst a dreadful shower of grape shot prepared for them, and a heavy fire of musketry from the fort guard. Lieutenant Adolphe D'Argy, of the Foreign Legion, a tall and powerful man, (whose gallant conduct was highly admired during the late Christino incursion towards Estella) was one of the foremost to clamber up the breach and kill two artillerymen at their guns, by hurling a couple of paving stones at their heads. The fort guard was then chased away amidst loud shouts for *Carlos Quinto!* which attracted strong reinforcements of the garrison to the spot; when the few who had then entered were driven down the breach again at the point of the

bayonet. Again the storming party collected and formed for the assault, their outstanding comrades pouring in a destructive fire, though exposed at every moment to one equally dangerous from their own batteries which continued to play on this point, apparently in ignorance of the real assault on La Parra, although a messenger had been sent to warn them; but it seems he never reached Captain Rochefoucault;—probably killed by the cross fires. The garrison now rushed into the fort, manned the walls and poured a heavy fire on their assailants, who prudently retired and drew up in a hollow space at some distance from the lines, sheltered from the fire of the Carlist batteries, and partially from that of the garrison;—there they remained for a while, firing away, being still in hopes that the arrival of reinforcements would enable them to retake the city. But the grape shot and fusillade of the garrison was renewed and continued with ardour:—no reinforcement arrived (probably from the delay caused by the necessity of going around over very broken ground, to avoid the shot and shells of the forts); so after replying to the fire of the garrison for about twenty minutes, the storming party withdrew to the ravine where they had found shelter previous to the attack, and there halted and preserved strict silence for about twenty minutes more. The garrison believing that their enemies

had marched to renew the assault on some other point, also ceased firing and kept careful watch along their line. The Carlists then silently returned, and carried off their wounded. The Baron de los Valles, who remained to see the sufferers brought up on their comrades' shoulders and sent to the Hospital at Zamudio, was reported to be amongst the slain. Next morning he was received in the camp as one risen from the dead. Some of his friends were inquiring about his body; others had already given directions that masses should be said for his soul; and the Alcalde of a neighbouring village refused to honour his order for *raciones*, on the very justifiable plea that dead men could not eat. Orsini, the brave commandant of the Foreign Legion, was killed in front of the breach. Amongst those who entered it and returned alive, were Lieutenant Charles D'Argy (brother of Adolphe) and a young French officer of the Engineers (Captain Villiers), who had walked down the hill with the Foreign Legion and afterwards walked into the fire with them, armed only with his sword; but a wounded man soon resigned his musket and cartridges to his use. He then dashed on with the rest, one of the most effective of the party. Young, light, and agile, he climbed up into the breach on the shoulders of a tall German, who

kindly lent him a lift; but he was scarcely up, when he was felled by a blow of a Christino musket. The bayonet was the next moment at his breast; when a shot from the tall German, who had just gained the parapet, laid the Urbano prostrate, and saved the young captain for another day. Next morning he received a downright scolding from his old General Sylvestre, who asked in the true spirit of a disciplinarian, "Who ordered you to go there, Sir? I might have wanted you here!"

Lieutenant Adolphe D'Argy returned with three musket shot holes through his frock and trowsers, but in a whole skin nevertheless, for which it is difficult to account, for his musket was seen splintered to pieces by grape-shot as he raised it to fire while approaching the parapet. It was then that in default of better weapons he took to stones. I was assured that fully 120 of the Foreign Legion passed the breach, and I fully believe that if the promised reinforcements had arrived in time, the town would have fallen into the hands of Don Carlos. We may fairly estimate the moral force in operation at each side by the fact, that the Carlists thought it only necessary to send 1000 men (450 to storm the breach, and 550 more to support them,) against a garrison (strongly defended by regular lines and forts) of between 4000 and 5000. Knowing that the storming party had entered,

those who remained on the heights could not believe that it was within the power of the Christinos to drive them out again; and when Lord Ranelagh and Count Valdeck returned with the actual news of the repulse which the Foreign Legion had sustained, they found the General and everybody incredulous.

The next day the bombardment was continued, but went on rather slowly, greater attention being paid to the projection of the shells. However, considerable doubts were expressed as to the policy of continuing, or, indeed, of having adopted such a proceeding against the city. It ought, according to all the considerations of humanity and the rules of civilized warfare, to be only employed in cases of stern necessity, with the view of bringing a siege to a speedy termination by the moral as well as material injury it inflicted on the defenders preparatory to an assault. In this case, however, the bombardment rather produced irritation than intimidation; the property of friends and foes also suffered alike; not, however, to the extent that was anticipated, for M. Lizoire's incendiary balls by no means realised the expectations formed of them either by Carlists or Christinos. Indeed, constructed as the fortifications were, it was quite possible to take the town without any artillery, by a surprise and assault well supported. The only



ditch is neither wide nor deep,—the parapet might be easily passed—and, these two obstacles overcome, the place would be defenceless despite of all the artillery on the ramparts. An instructive incident occurred in the course of the assault,—the storming party passed the ditch without fascines or ladders,—stepping on each other's stuck-bayonets and shoulders!

An official report of all the killed and wounded, up to the date of October 27, two o'clock P.M. announced twenty-five infantry killed and 113 wounded. Of these fourteen were killed and fifty-five wounded the previous night, eight killed and nineteen wounded belonged to the Foreign Legion, and six killed and thirty-six wounded to the Castilian Provisionals, also engaged in the assault. There were besides six artillerymen killed and sixteen wounded in the batteries. The latter were much annoyed towards the side of the convent St. Augustin, and it was thought that the breaching cannon would have a better effect if distributed anew; so during the night a couple of pieces (thirty-six and twenty-four pounders) were sent from the first position, near the convent, to another between that battery and the second, erected at Ulibarri. The garrison on their part did their utmost to repair the extreme northern fort, Mallona, and to throw up works to top the ingress of assailants by that route.

If an illustration be required of the feelings with which Spaniards enter into a combat, and of the miseries which must attend their civil wars, it will be found in the fact that there were several sons in the Carlist army whose fathers were Urbanos in Bilbao! The latter enrolled in their ranks all from the ages of fourteen to sixty. They played a desperate game, and looked on the probable destruction of their property in the city as a trifle compared with the consequences of defeat. Hence their energy; hence San Miguel found them the most effective part of his garrison! On the outside, all was life and activity to hasten the siege and accomplish the capture while the good weather lasted. The country was still clothed with all the rich verdure of autumn;—only the fig-trees had yet shed their leaves. The valleys which environed St. Domingo presented on every hand evidence of natural fertility and high cultivation. That which lay on the Bilbao side appeared like a series of gardens and country seats: as the spectator looked around on the other side from the ancient *Ermitana* that crowns the summit, his eye alighted on the villages of Zamudio, Derrio, Luchoa, Erandia, Azua, Sondica, Lexona and Algorta, sweeping in a long oval valley till the eye returned by Portugalete, Olaveaga and Deusto, to rest on Bilbao again.

. The contrast presented by the mountains, clad as

they were in heath and furze above the line of oaks and chestnuts, rendered the scene still more impressive. These heights have all the natural accessories of a good position for a summer encampment,—being furnished with wood, water, bedding, and browsing, and one excellent road leading from the heart of the Carlist resources, right through the midst of the hills, (everywhere commanded by them,) to the besieged town—the capital of Biscay. I say for summer, because in winter it is impossible for any troops (and these mountaineers are amongst the hardest in the world) to remain there, exposed to a degree of cold and damp combined which is sufficient to convert fingers and toes into icicles.

On the 27th, thirty-one deserters from the Christino lines at Vitoria and Navarre, arrived at the camp, in four several parties. During the night, the rain fell in torrents and continued at intervals on the 28th, so that the army began to fear that Bilbao would escape by the mere access of winter. The troops were still in their summer clothing, and although they had hitherto been very comfortable and effective in their light linen trousers and hempen sandals, it was impossible that they could endure half a dozen such nights, (destitute as they were of any protection except what they could get up in the shape of rude huts formed of branches interlaced with heath,) without being reduced to a

condition that would oblige them to continue their winter's campaign in the hospital. The 28th was however, partially fine, and the General made the most of it, directing the fire of the new battery (the 4th) against the convent of St. Augustin, which San Miguel had filled with sharp-shooters who seriously annoyed the breaching battery. There was, I believe, an intention of trying another assault, (with all the lights which experience could furnish as to the causes of failure on the first attempt;) but the heavy storm of rain which set in, sufficed to derange every operation of this nature.

During the early part of the day, while the sun shone bright on the town and the batteries, numbers thronged the hills that overlooked them, to witness the progress of the siege, as usual, and be shot at by los fuertes del Circo, La Parra, and Campo Santo. I cannot account for it, but the Christino gunners always "fancied us" more particularly at the period of Corporal Trim's love fits, that is to say "of a morning." This particular morning (the 28th), General Fernando Zavala (to whose kind assistance I was indebted for the comforts of bed and board on the heights of St. Domingo) was standing along with Brigadier Orcasitas, while General Simon de la Torre stood between them, in front of the General's hut. Just then a twenty-four pound shot from Del Circo came,

with admirable precision into the midst of the group, going right through the ample cloak of Zavala, carrying off half the skirt of that of Orcasitas, as they amicably fluttered in the breeze, and shaking the pantiles on the General's hut behind. It was a sight for Cruikshank, as they looked at each other, looked at their skirts and then looked over the hut for Simon de la Torre. He was nowhere to be seen. "He was a brave man!" said one:—"A true Carlist!" rejoined the other.—"Thank you!" said the missing general who had just stepped aside a moment before, to light a cigar, and so lost his share of the shot which would certainly have saved him from all further earthly troubles.

While laughing over his loss, and admiring the aim of the Christino Artillero, the Chief of Staff (General Urbistondo) put his head out of the hut, and very properly desired they would all leave that, and have their joke out somewhere else; for if they stood before the hut so directly, the roof would inevitably be broken and the rain get through. As it was, the rain did penetrate and the bed straw soon became very wet and uncomfortable; so I carried off my portfolio to the *Ermitana* of St. Domingo on the adjoining summit, which, having a waterproof roof, had been selected as a station for the principal powder magazine. It served as a

convenient *tertulia* for the gossip of all the peasant girls during the heavy showers, and afforded an excellent view from the portico ;—for the hills were crowded all day, despite of the rain, with visitors from the villages in the valleys who came to spend the day with the besiegers. I could not but admire the confidence, good faith and sociability, which pervaded the camp. There was a sentinel at the door indeed, but all who pleased went in and out at discretion :—however, every body was prudent enough to refrain from entering while he had a cigar in his mouth. As to ordinary causes of alarm or anxiety (in the English acceptation of the word) they seemed to be quite insensible. The *Ermitana* was built up on two sides with dwelling houses, the entire forming a block building, yet they seemed to have no fear of the cookery fires at the other side of the wall. The door stood open towards Bilbao for the sake of the prospect, but the Christino balls and shells never entered, although the magazine was visible from their hill forts of Morro and Miravalles, and the Carlist artilleros could plainly be seen throughout the four days which the siege lasted, carrying their powder barrels from it down to the mortar battery at Begoña. However St. Dominick, (although fallen from his altar and merely set steady on his feet in the corner, as a point of canonical etiquette,) still preserved the

magazine from either round shot or shells, very fortunately for me, as during the latter two days I had established a comfortable writing and drawing desk of empty ammunition boxes in the open doorway for the sake of light. The women looked on with eyes that penetrated through and through the silver-paper leaves of my manifold writer, even to the metal tablet; and when they discovered "the principle," were exceedingly complimentary to Mr. Wedgwood. "Not that there was any necessity," they truly remarked "of sending a *doble* by a second messenger through the Basque provinces when a Carlist *correo* had been dispatched with the first. A Basque *confidante* would die sooner than betray his trust. But when the mail-bag passed the frontier and got among the scoundrelly Christino consuls and agents in such foreign places as Behobia and Bayonne, there was no knowing what might happen."

The children too, lined the heights to look on, without a thought of the risk they ran. In the field before the *Ermitana* stood a beautiful girl (whose eyes would have turned the gaze of the Olympic audience from those of Madame Vestris), leaning on her *chère ami*, *la sentinella*, who held her umbrella over her head while he explained the operations going on below, "There," said he as I passed, "the garrison is getting out another gun in Mallona to bear against our battery!" and then he cursed

unmentionably ! I lent the happy couple my telescope ; on which the sentinel, a very fine young fellow, planted his musket as a standard for the *visto*. The girl after a short view, declared that she could see quite as well with her own eyes, and as her companion seemed to prefer seeing everything reflected therein, my telescope was returned with *muchas gracias*, and I left them to their happiness. The peasantry were washing clothes in the stream as usual at the Ulibarri side, regardless of the cannonade, as if they could not be hit ! But the Christino sharp-shooters were doing considerable mischief there on the 28th. At three o'clock p.m. poor Rochefoucault was struck in the breaching battery by two balls, one through the head, the other through the body, fired at the same instant, from the convent of St. Augustin. His death was a severe loss.

An hour afterwards, we beheld an interesting movement of the garrison ; a sally of 500 Christinos from Fuerte Mallona and the Arsenal at the river-side, to storm the batteries and spike the guns. These were defended by the brave *Guias de Alava*, under their commandant Lieutenant-Colonel Gavidia, who received them so gallantly that the assailants were obliged to turn and fly for shelter to the forts again.

Captain D'Erhouart was wounded there, but



slightly. Several artilleros also suffered severely, but the loss of the Christinos was so much greater in this arm of the service that San Miguel was obliged to supply their places with infantry. The Count de Coetlogon, a page of Charles X., who crossed the frontiers with me, and immediately obtained a lieutenancy in the corps of engineers (corresponding with his attainments in *L'Ecole Polytechnique*) was very arduously engaged from the commencement of the siege in the construction and repairs of the batteries, but, though exposed at every moment, happily escaped without a scratch. The Prince Don Sebastian, who was quartered at Zamudio, was present every day on the hills, overlooking the operations, and constantly wrote expresses of their progress to the King.

The native Basque troops assembled before Bilbao formed a very respectable force; not perhaps in the English or French sense of the word, their uniforms being of various patterns in the same company, few having stocks or stockings, and fewer still having their shoes blackened: (indeed, the majority wore sandals instead;) but respectable in essentials rather than semblances. They were perfectly careless of danger, wounds and death, yet docile and obedient; highly sensitive and jealous on the subjects of national honour and individual dignity, yet contentedly bearing privations of clothing,

lodging, pay or diet, as the case might be, which would make British troops fretful, insubordinate, pestiferous and useless (*vide* St. Sebastian). I have been amongst these fine fellows day and night on the hills where, though they were exposed to all weathers unprotected, and experiencing what I once heard an Irish beggar describe as "the height of inclemency, and no usage to mend it," I have never heard them grumbling, or found them seeking to drown their cares in *aguardiente*. I never saw a drunken or quarrelsome man amongst them, and never heard of such a thing as a flogging. I heard, indeed of an intended robbery at Estella, and saw the man who saw the man who heard of one actually committed there (a boyna being snatched off somebody's head at night.) Such a thing might occur in Navarre (for I lost a pair of spurs there), but I believe it to be impossible in the mountains of Biscay. I left my knapsack, my portfolio, my cloak, my telescope, my pocket flask, &c., in any hut or magazine that I found most convenient, and nobody meddled with a single article. In the pauses of war all were gay as larks,—chatting, joking, card playing, or singing "*à la gloria*."

The Biscayan *paysanas*, young and old, went through the camp whenever they pleased, fearless and unchallenged. It was to them only a large assembly of friends and acquaintances where they

were as safe and free from insult as in their own houses. They are, indeed, a truly honest, innocent, and amiable people, and I felt much more at home amongst them, than ever I could amongst the peasantry of England. Seeing with what singleness of heart and true national feeling they combated for the honour and independence of their native land, I could not help viewing the deaths of all slain by the mercenaries of San Sebastian, as so many murders, instigated and virtually perpetrated, by Lord Palmerston. I am willing to believe that he plunged his country into this disgraceful "*naval warfare*" in absolute ignorance of the intelligence, unity, power and perseverance which distinguish this peculiar people, or he never would have committed himself in an attempt to force on them the yoke of a nominal *Queen*, whose personal weakness they despise, and whose savage club-law rulers they abhor: a people who know their strength and rights so perfectly, that they will not even concede to their own cherished and patriotic *Señor*, the title of King!

## CHAPTER XI.

DECIDEDLY bad weather having rendered the continuance of the siege impossible, I left the heights of St. Domingo on the 29th of October, and rode to Durango amidst a storm which frequently obliged my mule to stop lest she should be blown away, as well as to shake the hail out of her ears. During the previous night and all that day the General was wisely occupied in removing his artillery, &c., to Zamudio to undergo repairs. His men too, needed rest, and were allowed to take it, in the conviction that as soon as the weather cleared, all would be ready to return with fresh vigour and efficiency to the siege. The King had given the order "Bilbao is to be taken!" The factories were at work night and day, preparing ammunition and supplies; so, although the tops of all the mountains were covered with hail and the weather was intensely cold, every one wore the aspect of activity

and determination. Don Carlos returned from Elorrio to Durango on the 30th of October to be nearer the scene of action. Don Sebastian arrived from Zamudio, General Villa Real from St. Domingo:—a general council was held, and all was activity and energy. It was expected that by the time the weather cleared up, the Count Casa Eguia would be able to lend his valuable assistance at the siege. His scientific attainments as a military man were known to be of the first class, and his successful assaults on Plencia, Lequetio and Guetaria the year before, had established his fame as “the man for a siege,” so all eyes were now turned on him. Fresh forces were ordered up, while twenty-two battalions lay round the town in a double cordon, maintaining the blockade under Don Castor and Simon de la Torre. Four artillery officers arrived on the 30th, to offer their services (three of the Royal Guard of Madrid, the fourth from Prussia), and were speedily employed. The funeral obsequies of Brigadier Cuello and Captain Rochefoucault were performed in the church of the Palace at Zamudio on the morning of the 29th, before I returned to Durango. The bodies were carried from the camp along the road with military honours, and attended by the companies of artilleros whom they had commanded so bravely, as far as their duty would permit. The latter then returned to their

task of removing the last of the guns from the batteries, and succeeded in saving every thing except the sand-bags. The conduct of the obsequies was continued, under the superintendence of Colonel Lacy, Adjutant General of the artillery. The remains of poor Rochefoucault were deposited and secured in a coffin, of which the key was forwarded to his father, the Marquis, in France.

Hail, rain, and very chilly weather still prevailed, and as it was found absolutely impossible to do anything effective against Bilboa while it continued, the troops were withdrawn, (on the 4th November,) and comfortably lodged in the villages around ;—the wounded in Zamudio and in the adjacent *casarios* (or farm-houses), where they met with every attention. The Prince, Don Sebastian, resided there during the siege, and visited the hospital as well as the camp every day ; doing all in his power to relieve and cheer the sufferers. On his departure he presented every wounded private with a dollar, and every officer with ten—sums which sound very small in English ears, but which caused very grateful sensations in Biscayan hearts, and were truly acceptable in time of war, in winter and in an hospital. The losses and sufferings of the Christinos were truly deplorable, according to the accounts brought by those who escaped from the town. It was said that 900 had been buried or

walls were strong, indeed, and the door was at the town side; but the thirty-two pounder would have overcome the former, and a pot of tar with some faggots have opened the latter. Zumalacarreghi smoked several obstinate garrisons out of such strong holds. However, this position might have been stronger, and the bombardiers less at their ease, if Lord John Hay's plans had been put into execution when he landed at Bilbao with 500 marines in June 1835, and proposed to fortify it;—an offer which the Christinos in their wisdom, refused to avail themselves of. It was another subject of surprise that the assault was not made with all the disposable forces lying around the town, and in the day-time, or at least at day-break, when all danger of friends firing on each other would have been avoided. The Scotch have a very true saying, daily proved by Spanish practice, viz. "Nothing is easier than to make mistakes!" Some excellent illustrations of the adage are afforded in a report addressed by the Christino General Arraoz, to the Queen's Minister-at-War, dated Bilbao the 29th October, 1836.

"Seeing the walls giving way, and judging that an assault could be easily made, the enemy attempted it at eleven o'clock at night, and attained the parapet; but, having charged them with unequalled intrepidity, we precipitated them into the

fosse, where they left about 200 men either killed or wounded."

In the first place, the assault was not made at the ostensible breach where "the walls were giving way," and where the garrison doubtless expected it, at Fort Mallona; but at the smaller fort (La Parra) to the left, where they were in some degree taken by surprise (as the Duke of Wellington took the French at Badajoz) through an embrasure, one side of which only was injured by the batteries. Next, only fourteen Carlists were killed and fifty-five wounded, at the assault. All the latter were carried safely away by their comrades soon after the fire had ceased, and none left in the fort or fosse but the *dead*, whom the garrison could count at leisure, and whose numbers their General cautiously refrains from giving. During the whole siege, (which lasted three days after the assault,) the entire amount killed, including peasants and those who died of their wounds, was, as near as I could ascertain, forty, and the wounded 200. The writer continues:—

"This attack, and those which followed during the whole night, prevented the reconstruction of our batteries with a proper degree of solidity, so that on the morrow not only were they unable to fire, but they were again destroyed."

Arraoz must have been dreaming "the whole



night" of fresh attacks. Not a shot was fired within or without the town from half-past eleven, when the storming party was repulsed, till day break. I was on the hills all the previous day and all night till near sunrise again, and did not leave the height overlooking the town until the assailants had brought up the last of their wounded, and the whole Carlist camp (with the exception of sentinels) had sunk to repose after their fatigues. All the other (false) attacks were those preceding the real attempt to storm at half-past ten. At half-past eleven, the din of war was exchanged for the most extraordinary silence,—observed on the part of the late assailants to enable them to carry off their wounded unnoticed, and by the garrison to catch the first sound of a still expected assault on the great breach or elsewhere.

"The night following," continues the report, "the enemy made his dispositions for a new assault, which we prepared ourselves to sustain; but his soldiers, disheartened by the experience acquired the night before, would not make the attempt, and all the severity of their officers could not compel them."

This is an unqualified falsity! The men, who set far less value on their lives than the General did, were most anxious to make an entry at all hazards.—The fact was, that such heavy rains set

in, accompanied by strong wind and extreme darkness, that Villa Real wisely postponed the attempt. The soil around Bilbao at the eastern side where the Carlist forces lay, is decidedly clayey, and after rain, the toil requisite to climb the steep ravine that lies beneath the parapet of Fort Mallona would have been at least as great as that necessary to succeed in catching a shaven, soaped pig,—not taking into account the additional items of a musket to carry and shots to receive both before and behind, as happened in the previous attack on a much calmer and clearer night.

The next sentence informs us—

“The night having on this account and that of the rain, passed without any hostilities against the town, we succeeded by hard labour in re-building the old parapets and constructing new ones; so that the day following (the 28th) all the batteries were as solidly established as before the siege—firing on those of the enemy with so much success that his were silenced at all points at four o'clock in the afternoon.”

This is rather too strong ! Fort Mallona was not and could not be repaired; so the besieged contented themselves with throwing up defences in the back ground, on which they mounted two field pieces and blazed away at the Carlists' breaching batteries with a spirit and perseverance truly

admirable, considering that their regular artilleros were either killed or wounded and that their place was at this period supplied by volunteers. However, all their gallantry would have availed little if the weather had held up and allowed the lightly clad Carlist battalions to keep the hills. Again the writer asserts—

“As it entered into the design of the enemy to glut his vengeance on the town, according to the plans concocted by such men as the Bishop of Leon, Eguia and the Marquis de Valdespina, who had come to witness these horrors, &c.”

The Marquis de Valdespina was present one day, accompanied by his son, and, as President of the deputation of Biscay, it might be supposed that he had a very sufficient motive and a tolerable right to take an active part in operations for besieging the capital of his province, occupied by an enemy, uninfluenced by Vampire predilections ;—but the Count Casa Eguia, (fortunately for the Christinos) was confined to his house in Durango with gout the entire siege, otherwise Señor Arraoz might have missed the opportunity of making such a report. The Archbishop of Leon, who was also at Durango all the time, is perhaps the least inclined of any man in Spain to find amusement in a bombardment. They might just as well accuse Don Carlos of a taste for cruelty, who would

not hurt a fly ! The Archbishop finds himself drawn into the vortex of a sanguinary war by his attachment to his legitimate King, but all his hopes and desires are turned towards peace, charity and mercy. In this venomous civil war everything is misconstrued and misrepresented. Both parties are making serious mistakes every day; but the greatest personal one which has yet attracted my notice, is that of the Christino General respecting the temperament and tendencies of the amiable Bishop of Leon.

During this siege no interruption was attempted from without. Espartero was on the 25th of October at Haro with 10,000 men marching towards Pancorbo to co-operate in the movements against Pablo Sanz in the Asturias. On the 26th he was at Ona, on the 27th at Villarcayo, on the 28th at Villulazara; and it was not till he heard of the defeat of the Carlist expedition under that General, that he turned his face towards Bilbao. Even then he did not venture to approach the scene of action nearer than the valley of Mena; as Villa Real, the moment he had withdrawn his artillery from the mountains of St. Domingo, hastened to Llodio and Zudope to meet him, and by a series of excellent positions taken up in those wild mountains, kept him marching and counter-marching in the vicinity of Valmaseda for a full

fortnight, whilst Eguia renewed the siege with ardour. It was not till the 20th of November, that Espartero having received reinforcements of 3000 troops, was able to reach Castro Urdiales by a forced march from Guriezo, leaving his artillery behind. Reinforcements under Castaneda had indeed arrived by sea from Santander, at Portugalete during the October siege, consisting of the two Saragossa regiments (estimated at 2650 men, spared from the Asturias after the retreat of Pablo Sanz),—but these were completely kept in check by Don Castor Andechaga; and it was not until Villa Real had withdrawn that they succeeded (on the morning of the 2nd November), in slipping into Bilbao. With their assistance the garrison next day made strong sorties in the directions of Begoña, La Buya and La Peña, during which they burned eight excellent houses in the former beautiful village. A sharp contest took place, but they were eventually beaten back by Simon de la Torre and Manuel Saraza, with the loss of from twelve to fifteen killed and, it was believed, of sixty or seventy wounded. A very young Englishman (Ensign Merry, nephew to Don Francisco) who only arrived from London in September, was in the action on La Peña, the first of his fields, or rather of his mountains—and was much admired by the Alavese for his steadiness and sagacity. The

sleet was pestiferous, and the powder so large-grained, that the touch-holes of his company's muskets were continually becoming clogged. The equipment of the Carlists does not include a brush and picker, and nobody had a pin to spare. Fortunately, young Merry had a little parcel of Italian lancewood toothpicks in his pocket—and these he distributed among his men, who joyfully availed themselves of the gift (clapping them into their mouths as their hands were full,) by the aid of which they blazed away unremittingly. On such trifles often depend the fate of battles. Next day the suffering blockading forces, half dead with cold, were withdrawn from the immediate vicinity of the town, out of the way of such unprofitable skirmishing.

His Britannic Majesty's brigs *Saracen* and *Ring-dove* were in the river as usual during the operations in October, but did not approach the town nearer than the Convent of St. Nicholas del Desierto, where, (we subsequently learned) Captain Lapidge had landed his marines and employed them in completing its fortifications, to which he contributed two thirty-two pounders, and four of other calibres, from the *Saracen*. General San Miguel was not idle on his part in Bilbao, being day and night unremittingly occupied in strengthening the defences; as he knew well enough that the Carlists

had not abandoned the siege, but would surely return with their artillery as soon as it was repaired, and the weather permitted. In fact the blockade was only raised during three days, for the Carlists were in force again upon the heights on the 8th of November, beleaguering the fort of Banderas de Archanda.

The greatest changes occurred in the weather during the week of repose and preparation. On the 2nd November, the clouds descended to the very earth at Durango, and fulfilled their mission of a thaw so penetratingly that neither man nor mountain could withstand it. For my own part, I could not induce the sensation of warmth by the aid of all the clothing I could put on, with that of a brazero for a footstool in addition. Everybody else looked quite as miserable; and I was almost tempted to take my seat on the brazero (Dutch fashion), only it would have been so selfish, and so contrary to the dignified etiquette of Spain. The 3rd was equal to an English May-day in beauty and mildness,—but the sudden change was rather enervating. It was the eve of San Carlos, and the town was illuminated with candles placed in the open balconies without protection; but there was not the slightest breeze;—the flame of each arose as steadily as if it burned within the best patent chimney glass. On the 4th the sun came out

with a power which drove everybody into the shade ; and on the 5th it continued to shine with all the intense heat and brilliancy of what we should call a scorching autumn, and I was glad to write with my coat off. The sod was still damp and the roads soft, but if such weather continued only a few days much might be accomplished. How soon it might alter was everybody's apprehension, so they resolved to make the most of it ; and at the *fête* of San Carlos (when the King held the accustomed *Besámanos* at the Palace of Durango), he gave the inspiring order to take horse for Bilbao.



## CHAPTER XII.

ON the morning of Saturday the 5th of November, the King appointed Count Casa Eguia to conduct the further progress of the siege ; so, although still far from well, the old General at once left his couch, and accompanied by Lord Ranelagh, Count Boos Valdeck and a select staff, took horse for Guernica and Munguia where the greater part of the artillery-train was still undergoing repairs. His appearance as General-in-Chief, imparted a degree of hope and activity to every department. The work went on rapidly under his vigorous impulse, and on the evening of the 8th he arrived above Bilbao with two pieces (twenty-four and eight pounders,—he would not wait for more,) which he planted on Monte Archanda in the course of the night, bearing on the signal fort of Las Banderas within half musket-shot. Finding that operations were recommencing with spirit, not-

withstanding the weather was still unsettled, and the roads soaked,—I mounted my mule, and again rode to the camp, just in time to witness the General's first brilliant success.

At daylight, on Wednesday the 9th, he opened his little battery against the fort, which is situated in a most commanding position above the river, overlooking every point between Bilbao and Portugalete. It had long been used as a signal station for vessels entering and leaving the harbour, (as well as for telegraphic communications with Santander and San-Sebastian) and was now actively signaling on its own account at daybreak, probably expecting succours from the coast, (for Bilbao had none to spare,) and had got as far as —“They have planted two guns—” when Eguia cut the matter short by a twenty-four pound ball through the roof. The fort replied with its single gun; one man was seen escaping, and was shot through the head by the watchful guerillas who surrounded it: five more cannon balls decided the business. Lieut. Don Ricardo de la Eso, who held it with thirty-one infantry, four gunners, and an eight pounder, made up his mind that a defence was hopeless against such a man as Eguia; so he hung out a white pocket-handkerchief. This was rather too small to be seen through the smoke, so as the Carlists continued to blaze away, the Commandante very

wisely ran to his bed, and taking off a sheet, returned and shook it over the breastwork till he attracted attention. After a short parley, the garrison surrendered at discretion, marched out, laid down their arms and immediately received the protection of the General who, they well knew, never abused his power in the hour of victory.

The Carlists found in the fort a quantity of ammunition, biscuits and rum. Amongst the former were 16,000 musket-cartridges and several boxes of those abominable glass globe grenades which are quite as liable to explode, from the drying and warping of the fuse, before they leave the hands of the grenadiers, as after. The gun, an eight-pounder, was a beautiful old piece of Dutch bronze,—distinguished by much more emblazonment than either Spaniards or English think necessary. Eguia ordered it to be instantly turned against the bend of the river, above Desierto, where the Rias Nervoin and Salcedon unite. This sufficed to make the Christino gun-boats keep at a respectable distance, from whence they amused themselves, in company with fort Desierto, by firing at their lost friend Las Banderas, but without doing the slightest damage.

As the General was proceeding, at half-past seven that morning accompanied by the 2nd battalion of Navarre, to take formal possession of the fort, a

cry from the hills of "*Los Enemigos!*" attracted his attention. Looking down to the left, his quick eye caught the cause of the new sensation. The Christino garrison of the Capuchino convent, who had taken alarm at the cessation of the cannonade above, were in full flight across the plain between the river and the hill, hoping to escape to Portugalete, while the General's hands were full. He instantly shouted to his men, "*Muchachos! abajo! corre!*" and the whole battalion rushed down the hill like a torrent, —the General cheering them to the chase. His voice, which is remarkably sonorous and commanding, enables him in ordinary times to get through his business with much fewer Ayudantes than a man of less impressive physique would require, but on the present occasion its powers were elevated to a stentorian pitch, and like the Nile in years of greatest promise to the Valley of Egypt, extended "from mountain to mountain." The Christinos instantly stopped, turned and fled in different directions, pursued by the victors, firing and following them up indefatigably. Had they in the first instance stolen away to Bilbao, they might probably have thrown themselves into it, but now it was impossible. One party took possession of a Palacio belonging to the family of Monteforte in the village of Deusto, while others dispersed through the fields and along the road which runs

in a circuit with the river round Monte Cabras and Las Banderas to Portugalete, hoping to find boats to enable them to cross and throw themselves into the fortified Christino convent of Santo Mames, on the brow of the opposite bank. Its garrison were well inclined to aid them in the attempt, and were seen running down to a number of boats which they had secured between Santo Mames and the cordage-factory of Allia adjoining. By this time Don Castor's Guerillas who occupied the heights and houses all along that side of the river, were alive to the chase and hastened to the ferry to intercept the succour. Getting under cover of the garden walls and hedges adjacent, they kept up such a dangerous fire on the shoal of boats (I counted forty-seven moored there,) that the Christinos were not able to effect a single launch, and their hunted comrades, abandoned to their own resources, were obliged to surrender at discretion. The party who defended the Palacio, consisting of four officers and sixty-one men, also capitulated after a short resistance ; in short Eguia found himself before breakfast in possession of both garrisons consisting of 228 men, among whom were nine officers, (one a surgeon,) and strange to say, all except one or two unhurt, though so many shots had been fired at the runaways.

The sight from Las Banderas was highly interest-

ing, and the burst down the hill on the view-halloo magnificent ! It was throughout hunting rather than warfare, and terminated with as little bloodshed. As all the Christinos had the prudence to surrender when close pressed in the houses where they took refuge, they were permitted to retain their knapsacks and clothing, notwithstanding the wintry temptations that assailed the victors (who had already felt its smart on the heights of Santo Domingo a few days before), and in conclusion were safely marched off to Munguia under escort;—the kind old General giving them a few words of assurance and consolation, which cheered all their hearts considerably.

The Christino chase did not, however, end as harmlessly as it began: the Carlist troops, who had dispersed themselves through the houses in Duesto, in search of the fugitives, often found instead of them, sundry Christino-looking leather *botas* of excellent wine, which they made prisoners on their own account, and drank to the success of Don Carlos so zealously, that their intellects were not afterwards in the best state for discriminating between his friends and enemies; in short they voted the population of Deusto, Christino,—and their cellars and larders liable to “a forced loan,” as Mendizabel terms it, for the use of the army. It appears that the deserters of the Algerine legion,

the Navarrese, the Arragonese and the Castilians were chiefly engaged in the chase, and feeling themselves quite foreigners in the newly discovered land of promise, were the principal actors in the commissariat work, which did not certainly proceed on the co-operative system, but every man for his own mouth. However, none except a few Argelinos, got actually intoxicated, and no personal violence was offered to any one. Some kitchen utensils, cloaks and blankets, were also enlisted and ordered on active service by the volunteer *comisarios*, as species of armament of which indeed the army stood in great need. Had the Basque peasant battalions, (i. e. Biscayans, Alavese, or, Guipuscoans,) only been there, I am confident every description of property would, as heretofore, have been respected. The inhabitants of Deusto, had however, no reason to be grateful for the manner in which they had been treated during the three years' visitation of the Christinos:—they assured me that the soldiers lived at virtually free quarters amongst them, perpetrating at will every *personal* violence, and that they could not have a fresh joint or a loaf in the house, without a claim being made and enforced by the billeted gentry for half. Besides the force in the convent of Los Capuchinos above mentioned, there were two hundred men quartered in the plain;—fifty in

the little fort of Olaveaga on the river bank, and one hundred and fifty more in the houses of the inhabitants. These outlying troops burnt the fort on the night of Villa Real's arrival, and prudently threw themselves into Bilbao.

Amongst the incidents of this day's work, the following deserves to be preserved as an illustration of the straightforward style in which Eguia acted. The captain of a Dutch vessel, who had come to anchor in the river over night, was not a little astonished to find the Carlists in possession of quays, hills, signal fort and all, next morning! Feeling himself in rather a strange position, he took his ship's flag, and walked up the hill with a few of his company, to learn what the Mountain General intended doing with him and his vessel;—protesting that he only wanted to fill his water-casks, and be off. Eguia assured him that he religiously respected all neutral flags, and should not interfere in the slightest with his progress outwards; but that he could not allow him to bring any supplies to the town, or any intelligence from it, at present; and that if he entered it, he must stay there during the siege. The Skipper was rather astonished at receiving such rational and considerate treatment at the hands of one who was painted by the Christiano limners as little better than a devil incar-



nate, and making his best bow, hastened back, jumped on board and dropped down with the tide to Portugalete :—not waiting to fill many water-casks by the way. The same evening a French gun-boat lying there, also sent to claim the privilege of free passage, not only down but *up* the river, to Bilbao! This Eguia bluntly refused;—assuring the officer who brought the message, that he was too well aware of the fact that France did not trouble itself to maintain even a show of neutrality towards Don Carlos, and that it had not the slightest ground to expect such a condescension at his hands.

The Christino garrisons of Las Banderas, Deusto and Los Capuchinos, were of the 4th light infantry of Valencia. The convent is, or rather was a fine building pleasantly situated on an eminence half way up the heights of Archanda; but the Christino government and garrison have left it little to boast of, excepting fourteen terrace flights, judiciously built against the hill side, leading from the convent to the village of Deusto below. The garrison had fortified the outer wall with loopholes, but finding Eguia in possession of Fort Banderas above, valiantly decamped without beat of drum, —and fortunately for the Carlists took wing in the wrong direction. War is a game of blunders, in

which he who plays badly, will always beat him who plays worse.

The artillery now came up the hills hour after hour from Guernica; all set to rights and ready for active service. Eguia immediately wheeled down a twenty-four pounder to the Esplanade of Los Capuchinos, and fired a few shots across the river at Santo Mames, to try the nerves of its garrison; but as they stood firm and returned the salute, he prepared over night for engaging them at closer quarters. The next morning (Thursday the 10th) a battery armed by two German engineers, Captains Roth and Straus, with four guns, (twenty-four, sixteen and two eight pounders,) was opened on the quay opposite this convent, one of the strongest places in the immediate neighbourhood of Bilbao; it was defended by a garrison of about 280 men with fieldworks and artillery which commanded the passage of the river. They brought an iron twenty-four pounder to bear on the Carlist battery; a twenty-four pound carronade, one brass eight pounder, one iron of same calibre, a three pound field piece and an eight inch mortar were directed against the houses and walls that sheltered the Carlist infantry in the surrounding fields; and an incessant fire of artillery and musketry was kept up on both sides from half-past seven till half-past

two. All this time the Carlist battery was doing irreparable damage to the convent, while its fire was not impeded in any degree by that of the Christinos, whose twenty-four pounder was at length laid bare and silenced. An immense breach was also made in the side wall that overhangs the river, which destroyed the first and second floors, drove the Christino sharpshooters from that part of the convent, and finally exposed their magazine in the church where their cartridges lay, to the direct fire of the battery through an arch in the transept that was thus uncovered. The Carlists used no grenades that day, otherwise the convent would have been certainly blown up. A strong square dark farm house, two stories high, about 200 yards distant from the convent, but connected therewith by a covert way, and having its windows built up into loopholes, was also garrisoned by the Christinos who kept up a brisk fire at a neighbouring white house, filled with Don Castor's guerillas of Biscay; these replied with equal ardour, and a Montague and Capulet combat was maintained for seven hours, till at length the Carlists tired of this ineffective warfare, rushed across the intervening paddock exposed to the fire of the dark house, and burst through the new masonry of the windows with shoulders, hands, and bayonets,

killing one, wounding two below, and taking prisoners seventeen on the first floor who had not time to escape to the fort with their routed comrades through the hall along the covert way. The latter as soon as they arrived there, turned an eight pounder against the house and began to riddle it—fearlessly replied to by the musketry of the Biscayans, who had thus struck the first effective blow, and as their friends came in through the open window, prepared to follow it up by an assault on the fort itself.

The Christino gunners on the land side were very active, but they could not dislodge the guerrillas. Their 24 pound carronade was, for the last four hours of the siege, battering a tiled farm house to pieces. The distance was not equal to the breadth of Russell Square, and every shot threw up clouds of red or grey dust, yet the responses of Carlist musketry from doors and windows never slackened. A number of sharpshooters were also dispersed in the houses of the quay of Duesto on the eastern side of the river, to distract the attention of the garrison from the Carlist battery, while a strong force of the first battalion of Castile was sent across in boats lower down the stream at Olaveaga to aid Don Castor's Biscayans in the same endeavour by occupying the banks on the west. This manoeuvre was executed very steadily, the outposts of the

Christinos were all driven into a fisherman's house below the convent, while a breastwork which they had occupied in defending a steep path up the river bank was taken, and used as a guerilla redoubt against the fort, about 150 yards distant. The small field piece and mortar of the garrison were now directed to dislodge these dangerous settlers, but not a shot or shell had any effect in disturbing them. Additional numbers soon arrived at this spot, and the General who beheld the attack from the balcony of Los Capuchinos, right opposite, sent an Ayudante with orders for the re-distribution of their force in advance, preparatory to the assault on the convent. The grenadiers of the first of Castile were directed to drive the enemy from the house on the strand under the convent, and also to occupy a little shelving path which afforded the only sheltered line of approach to the breach. This company divided itself, Captain Don Jose Ocano with four of his officers and Count Boos Valdeck, led one party of sixteen under the shelter of the embankment wall and boats on the strand, through mud and marsh until they reached and took the house, driving the enemy before them. Double that number followed and took up their posts behind the wall at the river side, from whence they blazed away at the convent. A third party of thirty men led by Captain Espilla, Lieutenant Polito Paiz,

and second Commandant Don Santos Pintado, accompanied by Lord Ranelagh and Captain Peseito (Ayudante of Brigadier Sylvestre) ascended directly to the breach made in the side wall and river bastion. Here the force of the garrison awaited them, and the tug of war ensued.

Capt. Espilla was first on the path, which, steep and narrow, only allowed them to arrive in single file. As he entered the fosse into which it led, and turned to climb an embrasure he was shot dead. A few soldiers who had hastened up after him also threw themselves into the fosse, upon which fortunately no loop holes pointed, and exchanged shots with the garrison over the parapet. Lord Ranelagh was the first in the actual breach (a little to the left of the fosse) into which he climbed right a head over the shattered bastion, till he attained a station where he was seen by all who were still on their way to the assault; and there cheering and waving his sword and cap he brought up a score or two Castilians, all anxious to share the honor of taking the fort with *El Caballero Ingles*. However there was some trying work still to be done: the garrison resolutely defended their parapet and some sharp firing took place across it. Lieutenant Paez, a fine young man, was shot down as he attempted to enter over the parapet, and carried off with a ball through the neck and another

in the thigh. He died in about an hour after. Two privates were also shot in the fosse, and perhaps 20 wounded. The total returns are 25 wounded on this day;—very few were hurt elsewhere.

Whilst this hot work was in progress, the other party of sixteen grenadiers under Captain Don Jose Ocano sallied out of the house in the strand beneath, and ascended to storm the postern. To effect this, they had to walk in front of the loopholes of the convent along the top of the narrow wall which forms the parapet towards the precipice. This feat they performed, their Captain at their head, together with Lieutenant Don Fr. Zengolita Bengoa, (who fell seriously wounded) Count Valdeck and two *Subtenientes* (Don J. M. Barcala and Don Santiago Chico). A volley directed against the lock and hinges opened the door for them and also cleared the room within;—when after a few more shots in the passages, the garrison fled before them till they were stopped by the storming party who entered over the fosse, led by Ayudante Peseto. There the vanquished threw down their arms (rather late according to the etiquette of Spanish warfare) and the victors made the roof of the magazine church ring with “*vivas*” for Don Carlos. Here a scene ensued which it would be difficult to describe as it deserves. Every man seized his prisoner and pulled off his knapsack,

coat, vest, trousers, cap and shoes in a twinkling. The poor wretches believing they were about to be sacrificed, entreated for "*La Vida*," but the Carlists had no idea of injuring them. They wanted their clothes very much indeed, and took them as the fruits of hard earned victory after fair combat;—thus they settled the storming account to their perfect satisfaction. The Basque peasantry are not a cruel people, however they may have been driven to retaliate by the gratuitous brutalities inflicted on them. The only instance in which I heard of anything approaching it in the present affair, was in the case of a soldier who set his heart on the cloak of the Christino Commandante and grasped it very unceremoniously. The old officer resented the insult very unwisely, by drawing his sword and standing in his defence. The Carlist foiled of his prize and defied beside, took to his musket and bayonet, and would doubtless have slain him, if Count Valdeck had not interposed sword in hand, and ended the quarrel by thrusting the old gentleman and his two Lieutenants into the church, where he placed a guard to ensure the safety of their coveted apparel. These peasant-soldiers are very docile, and their officers have very little trouble in managing them except in the moment of victory: even then their thoughts are not of vengeance, but they have a very natural dislike to the appearance



of enemies (and *beaten* enemies) better clothed than themselves.

I crossed the river with Eguia at half-past two, on his way to the scene of action, and as we ascended the bank a succession of singular sights presented themselves—the victorious Castilians and Biscayans stuffing their new Christino knapsacks, and giving them into the care of peasant women old and young; the former declaiming and prophesying, the latter laughing for joy. A litter on which lay a wounded officer approached us. He recognised a friend amongst the Ayudantes of the General, and on uttering his name, the latter sprang to his side. The poor *herido* threw his arm round his neck and kissed his cheeks in transport that he had lived to behold him. Eguia was the next object of his ardour. "Ah! my General, give me your hand. I am dying, but it is for the good cause—and we are victorious. Recollect I was one of the first party that entered;—(the grenadiers of the first of Castile) and that my name is Zengolita Bengoa." The benevolent old General gave him all that remained of his single hand, cheering him in the hope that he should live and enter Bilbao with him; and did not leave him till he saw an Ayudante enter his name in the honorary list. He had a word of comfort and encouragement for every one, even for the poor prisoners who were marched out in their shirts, their

faces black with powder smoke, many bleeding, and all evidently very much fatigued and anxious to hear their fate. A sight of the kind and jolly face of Eguia dissipated their gloom. There was no thought in his mind of vengeful retaliation for Christino executions on Carlists taken by assault. They said nothing in reply to his word of pardon, but their eyes danced with grateful joy and they marched off as cheerfully as beaten and wounded men could, under escort to the depôt at Munguia where other clothes were provided for them. However, the day was so warm that clothing was almost an incumbrance. For the sake of decency all were permitted to keep their shirts, and, whether out of charity or generosity, many were also allowed to retain their head and neck gear of various shapes and values. A few had slippers or sandals, but not one a pair of shoes. These were too highly and justly prized in Biscay to be given or relinquished in the midst of a wintry campaign. "It would be treason to Don Carlos to let a Christino keep a pair that could be taken from him," said a young fellow as he looked down with pleasure at his new pumps, and rejoiced in the weight of a well filled Isabella knapsack. Even a Christino Lieutenant, whose drawers by some miracle faithfully adhered to him, marched barefoot with the rest;—bearing their reverse of fortune with an air of

thoughtful steadiness and patient capability of endurance—quite free from either apprehension or recklessness—which raised them considerably in my estimation. They evidently looked on the affair as one of the ordinary liabilities of civil war: thirteen had fallen, and the survivors seemed to think “’twas well ’twas no worse.” The majority were very young recruits, ill-grown boys whose stuffed cotton gorgets dangling about their necks like exterior craws, indicated the attention paid in the Christino ranks to the preservation of a full fair front to the foe. However the Carlist sharpshooters had for the last three years been making such extensive breaches in it, that the Captain-Generals, and Political Chiefs have been fain to fill up the gaps with the raw materials of flat-breasted boys and cotton wadding.

The number of prisoners made in the convent and houses adjoining amounted to 269, amongst whom were thirteen officers of the *Milicia del Tore* of old Castile, fifteen sappers and miners, and fifteen artilleros; the latter expressed a wish to serve Don Carlos, and I believe their wishes were gratified. However, all who were able to march were escorted to Munguia (the nearest town in possession of the Carlists, about five miles off), which they reached shortly after night-fall. A friend who was passing through it on his way to the camp, as the pri-

soners marched in half naked,—many stained with blood, the streets lit up by candles and wisps of straw in the hands of citizens who crowded to their doors, windows and balconies to behold them, —declared that he never beheld anything equal to it for startling unearthly effect. Pity soon succeeded curiosity, and few of the Urbanos of Munguia allowed the train to pass their doors, without bringing out a loaf or a pitcher of wine to cheer the drooping captives.

The severely wounded who were unequal to the march, were taken to the *Casa de Sangre* (the temporary surgical hospital fitted up on the heights of Santo Domingo—all who required it in litters) where they received every attention.

I saw a Christino Lieutenant thus borne up the mountain terraces of Los Capuchinos laid on a comfortable mattress, provided with clean sheets and coverlet. A Carlist Brigadier who had been to the attack, was conversing with him as I passed, keeping up his spirits and predicting from the favourable symptoms in his aspect his speedy recovery. The poor Lieutenant (evidently a gentleman) was lamenting the necessity under which the garrison had been placed of holding the convent to the last and hurting so many Carlists; while, on the other hand, the Brigadier was consoling him with the assurance that they had bravely acquitted themselves

and that everybody must respect them for the valiant defence they had made in discharge of their trust. Such was the tone and feeling which I was happy to find prevailing in the Carlist camp. However, there were not wanting one or two individuals (who were not in the fire that day) to make remarks in the crowd and give advice in a very different spirit; but the former were promptly scouted as unworthy of a soldier, and the latter fell unheeded on the ear of the kind hearted General:—they were exceptions which established the rule, and I can safely appeal to the fact of their general repression and rejection as affording the best illustration of the improved feeling with which the contest is conducted on the part of the Carlists. Eguia, who studied and fought under Wellington, in the Peninsula, and who is a gentleman by nature as well as by education,—was evidently as little in love with the stripping as with the slaughtering system; but as things stood, he was neither accountable for it, nor for the deficiencies in the military chest which led to such unseemly revivals of the penal code of war. He had only been a day and a half in command before Bilbao, up to the moment of this, his third victory (in two of which the prisoners were preserved by him intact in their appointments), and all his energies were tasked to raise the spirits of the army which had been not a

little depressed by the ill success of both previous attempts for the reduction of the town. He is a strict disciplinarian and well convinced of the inevitable results of good or bad management, especially in financial matters; so instead of holding out to his army the hope of license or permission to pillage if they entered Bilbao, he promised them (instead of the halves and thirds of pay which they ordinarily received on account) two months full and regular pay from the date of entry. The army knowing him to be a man of his word, accepted the assurance with gratitude, and set to work in earnest to take the town.

The Carlist guns were pointed against Santo Mames in this affair by Commandante Trovo, who adopted the ordnance arm of the service, and wielded it quite as effectually as if he had theorised through Woolwich or *L'Ecole Polytechnique*. Some men understand a thing at first sight, and succeed in a first attempt: Trovo is one of them. As Eguia rode by the battery to visit the prize, he stopped with pleasure to congratulate him on his good aim. It was true that the Christino twenty-four pounder had to fire down at a disadvantage, and the balls often flew wide and high,—one breaking an ash-tree and going through the church-door of Deusto above. The church of Santo Mames was laid completely open and the Carlist balls found free

ingress through the open transept to the Magazine in the nave. The garrison were firing from the side loft of the choir for hours till its floor and outer walls were dashed down; and how the church escaped being blown up by some of the wadding or cartridge-paper, or sparks struck by the balls, as they shivered the flinty walls,—was more than any of the captors could explain, as we walked over the scattered powder on the floor, a few minutes after the place had changed owners. There was no appearance of a mine, although the old Commandante seemed so well inclined to die game, or any attempt made by the garrison of Bilbao to send him succours or favour his retreat to the town, though only a mile distant; on the contrary, the Urbanos were very much alarmed on their own account; for the shouts of Don Castor's battalion when the convent was stormed, in unison with that of all the peasantry rejoicing on the hills, created such a sensation in the town that it was believed an attack was in progress; the tocsin of Santiago summoned the garrison to the walls, and the rumour spread of an immediate assault in full force. The cessation, first of the cannonade, then of the fusillade at Santo Mames, plainly indicated its fall; and while the victors were laughing at the notion of the joy bells in Bilbao,—asking each other what Santiago was saying to Santo Mames,—so

great was the trepidation and confusion within, that the quarter where the assault was expected was deserted by the garrison, and the Carlists might have marched in unopposed:—at least so they were informed by two deserters next morning, who, not liking the aspect of affairs there, took the liberty of escaping over-night.

The first of Castile having taken the fort, continued to occupy it as a post of honour, which as a great part was yet entire, afforded them comfortable quarters. They celebrated their triumph there at night, by bonfires and bell-ringing; but as the bells in Spanish churches are dismounted whenever an enemy is seen making preparations to cannonade them (“always ’tis a rule,”) except when they are about to be bombarded also, and it is necessary to give notice of the flight of the shells by sounding the bell,—they were obliged to be content with ringing them in *faccioso* style, that is, suspending them in the cloisters and firing ball-cartridge at each in harmonic succession. This *feu-de-joie-bell* is really a very striking specimen of the military music proper to these conventual wars, and might perhaps, be found worthy of cultivation if the accompaniment of the double-drum explosion could be dispensed with, and all the shakes, graces, echoes and vibrations of the style rendered fairly appreciable.



There was, however, a pleading going forward before the General, on the point of honour and glory involved in the question of *who* first entered and actually took the fort. The Biscayans who had garrisoned the white house in the field were certainly the first who made an assault, by breaking into the dark one which was an outwork of the fort (being connected therewith by the covert-way) and took seventeen prisoners;—they likewise claimed to be amongst the first who subsequently crossed the fosse and parapet. The grenadiers of Castile on the other hand, insisted that they alone captured the convent; and even these were divided amongst themselves on the point of priority. The wounded Lieutenant Zengolita Bengoa led his party through fire water and mud, in the bed of the river, and entered sword in hand, into the house on the strand,—captured its garrison, and then mounted to the assault on the postern, where he fell, wounded. There Captain Jose Ocano (the first in the breach at the storming of Plencia) took the lead, broke open the door and chased the garrison towards the breach where their rivals (the grenadiers led by Captain Espilla) were keeping up a gallant fire across the parapet at the defenders in that quarter, and were actually getting in over it at the moment. Here the garrison, placed between two fires, surrendered. The parapet

party insisted in their turn, that they were the first at the post of honour, the breach,—first to take possession of fosse and parapet, which they kept—and had actually driven the garrison to take shelter in the cloisters, when their rivals entered by the back door. “Very true,” say the stormers of the postern, “but we passed a fosse and parapet also on our way,—made a breach for ourselves, without artillery,—passed through the central court and silenced the garrison by our appearance!” There were many niceties in the case, and it was impossible for the General to decide it satisfactorily to all; so he wisely postponed pronouncing judgment until he could have a fair opportunity of referring the claims of the three storming parties, in the shape of a new case, to the decision of the Urbanos of Bilbao. Three things only were certain: that the 1st of Castille continued to hold the convent—that their Lieutenant-Colonel Don Pedro Nigueruela was promoted to the rank of full Colonel; and that Eguia presented Lord Ranelagh to the Infante Don Sebastian, as the first who entered the breach, and a most deserving candidate for the cross of the military order of the second class of San Ferdinand.

## CHAPTER XIII.

WHILE these conquests were going forward in the upper part of the river, the Carlists were not idle towards the sea side also. On the 8th of November, Don Castor Andechaga entered and occupied Santurce (a mile west of Portugalete) with 800 men, by which he obtained a complete command of the harbour outside the bar;—any vessels either entering or leaving it, being obliged to pass under the fire of his musketry. The brigs *Ringdove* and *Saracen* lay as usual safely at anchorage opposite Portugalete, while the *Comet* steamer rode without, waiting for a sufficiently high tide to cross the bar. This she subsequently effected on the 13th undisturbed by Don Castor, who was only intent on making war on the Spanish *Trincaduras*, and little guessed what active and formidable allies the apparently passive British vessels would prove ere the termination of the siege. However, the General's

orders were explicit; not to fire on, or provoke any hostilities with the British flag.

The Carlist army was now in high spirits. The news of the retrograde march to Valmaceda of the expedition which Pablo Sanz and Joaquin Elio had led into the Asturias, did not damp their hopes in the least. On the contrary, they were heard congratulating each other on the fact of so much additional succour arriving to aid them in bringing the siege to a speedy termination. The weather, however, again became very unfavourable for active operations. On the 11th and 12th November, heavy rain fell by day and night with little intermission. In the midst of it, Brigadier Bencoechea constructed a floating-bridge of poles and planks across the river from Deusto to Santo Mames, over which soldiers and *bagages* passed with ease. Thus Eguia took full possession of both sides of the river, pushing his advanced guards up to the gates of the convent St. Augustin on the east, to Santa Clara of the Conception on the west, and establishing his head-quarters in the Chateau on the quay of Olaveaga. Here, on the evening of Thursday the 10th, he received a *parlementario* from Bilbao, conveying a communication from Mr. Clarke the resident British Consul, who had interested himself in the reclamation of a North American brig (the *Opelousas*, Captain Collins, of Baltimore,)

laden with tobacco, which had been carried into the Port of Bermeo by armed Carlist fishermen, the vessel having approached the coast during stress of weather.

I subsequently saw this vessel lying safely in dock there. The Captain found it an excellent market for his tobacco, and assured me that the wind could not have blown him among a kinder or honester people. His neat little cabin was, I perceived, a complete *tertulia* for the Señoras of Bermeo, and he himself an especial favourite. He considered the venture an excellent one, and declared his intention of trying a second as soon as possible, whatever risk he might run.

Eguia next day dispatched Don Mariano Sanz, Ayudante of General Zarategui, to the gate of St. Augustin, where he was instantly fired at and mortally wounded by the garrison, although bearing a white flag and attended by a cornet in the usual form! The ferocious assailants kept up such a fire from the walls that the latter and a friend who witnessed his fate at a little distance dared not approach to remove his body; they believed him dead and returned to report this execrable violation of the laws of war. Sanz had received two balls in the body, but still lived:—at night he rose with painful effort, and tottered from tree to tree through the Campo Valentino till he reached the

advanced post of the Carlists: but all aid was unavailing; he died in the morning. His papers had been lost with his boyna, but the Carlists found them again on the spot where he had fallen. The act appeared to be one of the most needless reckless atrocity; and, after the generous pardon extended to the garrison of St. Mames by the Carlists the day before (although they had exposed themselves to the last severity of war by refusing to surrender till the place was entered by assault)—words are wanting to convey a just expression of the mingled ingratitude, cruelty and cowardice which could perpetrate it. No word of explanation or excuse arrived, and the outrage seemed to fill the minds of all but Eguia with the idea that the Christinos were incorrigible savages, and must be dealt with accordingly. The policy that could inspire conquering foes with reflections like these, preparatory to their assault on a devoted town, appeared to me little short of the madness of desperation, and I looked rather fearfully forward to the savage result of future conflicts. However, I had still great confidence in the native kindness of heart of the Basque peasantry (who in fact composed the greater part of the army) as well as in their habitual ready obedience to their officers, and I trusted, (and was not deceived,) that in the hour of victory they would prove themselves as merciful

as they were brave. It was not, however, till the conclusion of the siege that we heard the real state of the case; that the fact was not known in the city! at least not to the friends of Don Carlos who happened to be there during the siege; and that it probably was the mere overflowing of wanton impulsive barbarity on the part of some ignorant savages who were then upon guard.

On the same day the General made a reconnoissance towards the convent of the *Mercenarios de Burseña*, garrisoned and fortified by the Christians, two miles and a half from the town; and as their outer works were extensive, ordered field-works to be thrown up and directed against a large strong house, which formed the head of their position looking towards Bilbao. *Mercenario* sounds badly to an English ear, so it may be necessary to say briefly, that the Westminster legion were not there,—that it belonged to the order of Mercy, and that this particular establishment was originally founded for the collection and management of funds for the redemption of Christian captives from the Moors. The convent is a splendid building, situated on the western bank of the Ria Salcedon over which an entrance is effected from the Baya of Saroza by a suspension-bridge supported at each end by ornamental portals of cut stone on the plan made familiar to us by Telford in the

construction of that of Menai. Next morning Eguia began by breaking up his battery at the river side opposite Santo Mames, where he personally inspected, urged, and finally accomplished amidst violent rain, the embarkation of his heavy guns, (sixteen and twenty-four pounders,) and proceeded with them to the ferry-side at Bursena, where they were landed and remounted. Whilst the oxen were tugging them to the field works, the General again crossed the river to the east, and bringing with him two eight-pound field pieces, proceeded to take and destroy the bridge-fort of Luchana, (three miles from Bilbao, seaward) and thus prevent the arrival of reinforcements from Portugalete or Desierto by the river road. This bridge-fort was a tolerably strong work, consisting of a triple series of walls pierced with loop-holes (and which would have probably required some time to batter down, if well defended,) which had been built over the three arches of the bridge, and garrisoned by forty Christinos. The road is a mere causeway thrown across the *Ria* that flows up to Azua, and as the little fort occupied its entire breadth (cutting off all passage except through a side postern), the garrison might have held out as long as they had courage, supported as they were by the fortified convent of St. Nicholas del Desierto, on a hill about a mile down the river, mounting two thirty-two pounders which bore



on the spot, besides several gun-boats which lay alongside. To deal effectively with the latter, Eguia had ordered a battalion to take up a commanding position on Monte Cabras over head, from whence their fire was so serious, that (we afterwards learned) Commodore Morales, who lost six sailors killed and twenty-two wounded, soon sheered off with his gun boats. The General, in person, directed his two eight-pounders, and blazed away at the bridge-fort. La Desierto replied with grenades, one of which burst within twenty paces of Eguia's staff, but did no mischief to any one. At the third Carlist shot, the little garrison scampered along the causeway, and crossed at safe distance in the gun-boats to Desierto; whereupon Eguia took possession of the causeway, fort, bridge and all; broke down the centre arch and returned to pursue his operations at Burseña.

He arrived before it at half-past one, and sent Ayudante Peseto as *parlementario* with a *Cartel* offering honourable terms to the garrison, assuring them of personal safety, and guaranteeing that their clothes and knapsacks should be preserved to them. They must have been very well aware of their hopeless state seeing Don Castor's guerillas on every hill around, and the old timbers of the fortalice of the bridge of Luchana blazing as an assurance that no succours could

arrive on that side; nevertheless, their Commandante Captain Aymeric politely replied, "that General Eguia could not respect them if they surrendered till they were fairly compelled: but that they would not fire *first*." This promised pacifically, but there was not a moment to be lost; for the garrison of La Desierto might approach in a circuit westward by Baracaldo, and the gun-boats might come up the Ria with the tide to support them, and moor in front of the convent under the suspension-bridge, right between the assailants and the assailed. The field-work already thrown up against the foremost house was useless; all the garrison having retired within the loop-holed fort of the suspension-bridge which was protected in front by a trench and drawbridge;—so the General instantly wheeled a twenty-four pounder one third nearer to the convent and brought it to bear on a window in the upper floor out of which peeped a four pound ship gun. He next planted another, a beautiful bronze eight pounder cast at Seville, and inscribed "Venus," (taken on the 10th at Santo Mames) against the little fort with its drawbridge gate, and being in earnest, blazed away at once, walking leisurely from one gun to the other in full view of the enemy all the while, especially in the twenty-four pound battery (if the middle of the road where it stood

as naked as the day it was founded, deserved the name) until his staff succeeded in convincing him that all the good he could do by looking on, would not compensate Don Carlos for his loss at this crisis. A similar convincing argument was addressed to me with the substitution of the words, "Morning Post" for "Don Carlos," and I must do myself the justice to say that I comprehended its force much quicker than the General did,—took myself and my post behind a wall much more actively,—and thence took aim in continuation through my telescope with a much steadier conscience than before.

Venus, the 8-pound field-piece, soon dashed in the gate which defended the beautiful suspension bridge, whereupon the Carlists rushed across it and took possession of the houses adjoining the convent, within its line of fortifications. All the other houses in the fields adjoining were speedily entered and taken by the assailants, despite of another four pounder in the church steeple and the brisk fire of 144 infantry who with six artilleros and four officers constituted the garrison. The amount of the Carlist loss was only one artillero, whose leg was broken by a four pound shot from the piece in the upper floor. Soon after, the Carlists rapidly crossed the suspension bridge in force, exposed to a smart fire (which however did not hit a single

man) and as they gathered in the court yard and adjoining houses, preparing to burst open the inner doors, the Christino Commandante hung out a white flag, and appeared at the front balcony to accede to the General's terms. He handed the capitulation (previously sent by Eguia and now signed by himself,) to Captain Vial, an Ayudante of General Giubelalde, just arrived in the camp from Guipuscoa, and to Lord Ranelagh who had early crossed the bridge with him—Captain Vial returned with it to the General, who again guaranteed the terms, notwithstanding the resistance, and the garrison were allowed to march out with the honours of war.

In the convent were found 13,000 musket cartridges, besides ammunition for their two steeple and window guns,—excellent French castings. The Christinos had one officer and three men wounded. The Carlists behaved extremely well; full of indignation as they were at the murder of Don Mariano Sanz, having surrounded the garrison on every side—cut off all possibility of relief from the seaward—taken the fort at the suspension bridge by assault—entered across it through the fire of musketry—taken court yards—outhouses—outworks—and being within five minutes of storming the body of the convent, and the 150 bodies of the garrison, knapsacks and all—yet they instantly

respected the flag of truce, ceased firing, fell back from the open door, and eventually allowed the really excellent and tempting coats, trowsers and shoes to march off unchallenged, merely joking with each other about the loss.

There were some other points in that important day's work which appeared to be worthy of commentary, and which sufficed to convince me that the garrison were more than half-way Carlists already, or not at all unwilling to avail themselves of an honourable opportunity of retiring from the active service of the Queen, and of joining their passive comrades of Las Banderas and Los Capuchinos, made prisoners three days before, and sent off with full knapsacks "in the handsomest manner" to winter at Munguia, Lescano, and Atoun. I will not say that the Christino gunners did not want to hit us, for a Carlist artillero's leg was broken soon after the twenty-four pounder battery was opened in the middle of the road, and the General and his Staff felt their hats and caps twist on their heads before the garrison gave in; yet I am sure they did not put their hearts in their arms as the Carlists did, for on examining the two brass four-pound ship guns after the place surrendered, I found they had allowed the aiming slides at the breech (marked *Ferrier Freres à Paris*), to get out of repair and shake as freely as old thumb latches, though nothing

could be more easy and useful to the gunner than to close them by the blow of a hammer. The carriage of that one which had replied to the twenty-four pounder had shaken itself to pieces as if it had not been fired since its dry rot set in; the other was so placed in the church steeple that it could not possibly be brought to reply to either of the Carlist pieces, and had only the opportunity of firing one shot at an adjoining house which some of Don Castor's Guerillas entered, as they poured down from the hills to the assault. Again, the defences thrown up at the outer end of the bridge were very slight, at the inner end none;—and as soon as Venus had made a breach in the first, the little party who had held it, retired across the bridge to the convent, abandoning every house within their line and (as soon as thirty or forty men had dashed across after them) hanging out the white flag! They might, even if retreating step by step in their own works, have held out till dusk, and then perhaps escaped with trifling loss to La Desierto across the hills. Still better might they have effected it over the bridge of Luchana the previous night, when the first battery was raised. In short the entire of the five separate Christino garrisons that Eguia had been breaking up on the 9th, 10th, and 12th of November, proved themselves to be either great cowards, and bunglers,—

or quite the contrary, and very clever Carlists in disguise ! Even the garrison of Santo Mames which held out so long and so bravely in comparison, ought to have known that the place was untenable against artillery, and that a grenade fired in through the church window amongst their ammunition on the floor would have settled the affair the very first shot. They had 20 hours notice of the attack ;— the batteries on the esplanade of Los Capuchinos and the quay of Deusto having been constructing within their view so long, before the latter was opened for their demolition. A few trial shots from the former the day before, had proved that there was nothing cannon-proof about Santo Mames, and they ought to have taken the hint and have thrown themselves into Bilbao, (only a mile off) where they were wanted ; and where they might have saved something more than their shirts out of the fire.

A much more pitiable scene might have occurred on that occasion if the Carlist *parlementario* had been shot at the gate of Bilbao that day instead of the next, but Eguia kindly and prudently removed the prisoners from Santo Mames at once. No man could threaten more loudly and lustily till he got things done to his liking and done on the instant too ; but he thereby saved the necessity of sending round a Provost Marshal, and six assistants, as

General Evans was obliged to do, to flog the defaulters. No man in the army worked harder or to better purpose than the General;—seeing, overseeing everything and every body, giving his own orders and explanations, and getting that done effectively in an hour, which would probably otherwise require a day,—and have to be done over again perhaps to remedy some fatal mistake. On the 12th he took Burseña and Luchana (the convent, both bridges, and their forts) on the strength of a cup of chocolate and a bit of toast at sunrise. Breakfast, dinner, supper, everything was postponed for work and he thrived accordingly. He was obeyed with a surprising alacrity in all things, for every one confided in his good generalship, and were ready to compass any kind of possibility if he said it must be done. His arrival had occasioned "Great joy unto the camp," and I daily saw or heard of something kind or sagacious in his proceedings which gratified and encouraged the army. At the surrender of Burseña he was told that two Englishmen were amongst the garrison, "What matters it?" replied he, "the Convention is large enough to hold every one." Others might be found who would read that Convention far more narrowly. That garrison appeared to be in some apprehension while their tardy assent to the General's terms was forwarded to him for approval. They



had fired on the Carlists for three-quarters of an hour, and a rumour had reached them that the garrison of Santo Mames had been put to death! An earnest conversation took place between Captain Vial, who returned with the General's reply, and the Christino Commandante. I had just entered by permission to see the garrison while yet under arms, and arrived in the midst of a bustle occasioned by the Carlist officers thrashing out some Argelinos who had stolen in to help themselves if possible. Suddenly the discussion ended; the Christino Commandante exclaimed to his men in a loud and hurried tone, "*Armen Bayoneta!*" (Fix bayonets!) they did so. What next? thought I, not exactly knowing whether the battle was quite ended, or about to begin again without any respect to my presence. "*Pavellon de Armas!*" (Pile arms!) continued he. They did so, and marched out under the protection of a guard. It was all right—the General was satisfied—the garrison safe,—and Don Carlos proclaimed in Burseña.

The report of the massacre of the garrison of Santo Mames, I afterwards found had also gained credence in Bilbao, from whence the prisoners could be seen marching off in their shirts. They also heard a few moments afterwards, irregular discharges of some scores of musket shots! Eguia, who was returning with his staff to their quarters at

that moment, was rather startled, and dispatched an Ayudante to bid the Artilleros preserve and stand fast to their battery on the quay, supposing that either *trincaduras* or steam boats might be coming up the river to take share in the fray; but an officer riding up the next minute, brought word that it was only the victorious first of Castile firing a *feu de joie* by way of unloading their guns! Eguia presented an excellent English rifle and bayonet-sword found amongst the arms left by the prisoners, to Lord Ranelagh, who, at one period of the contest, was in considerable danger. The Carlist gunners who by the aid of Venus had knocked in the little drawbridge and fort that defended the suspension bridge, were still firing away through a hole in a house that served them as an extempore embrasure, (not having seen the small flag of truce that was hung out as soon as their comrades had crossed the bridge and taken possession of the outworks) when his Lordship clambered up on the scaffolding of the convent, right in the line of their fire and kept waving his cap as a signal of cessation. The gun fortunately did cease, and not a single Carlist was hurt except the artillero at the naked 24-pounder. I never knew so much done with so little loss, as was effected that week. The surgical hospital on St. Domingo (*La Sangre*,) had only twenty-eight cases altogether of Carlists and

Christinos entered on its books at the conclusion. Of these, twenty were sent away dressed and doing well to Zamudio and Guernica, two only suffered amputation and remained with hopes of recovery; the other six comprehended the bad and doubtful cases.

## CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER the capture of Burseña the rain fell in torrents for three or four days, and the roads became almost impassible. Winter appeared to be again setting in with violence, to forbid the renewal of the siege ; Eguía however never relaxed his exertions, but seemed the more determined to make quick work of it: 500 peasants were nightly employed on the batteries erecting for the attack of the town, in cutting faggots, or in building parapets with them and casks filled with clay, &c. (in the absence of the sand-bags which had been captured on the raising of the previous siege in October,) and in transporting provisions, artillery and ammunition over the mountain. The latter service if not so dangerous was quite as arduous. Though Bilbao was an important naval station, and plenty of blocks and ropes had fallen into their hands, they would not adopt the slow

though sure English mode of surmounting a height by a parbuckle. They could not spare time for that ; so when eight oxen were found unequal to the task of tugging a twenty-four pounder through the muddy road, they tackled sixteen to the carriage, and (abandoning the *camino*,) dragged it right over the mountain and into the battery. On the night of the 16th of November six different positions were armed ;—five of them in the neighbourhood of Sant Augustin and the river where it leaves the town, nearer to it, lower and more northerly than those erected during the October siege. The garrison had kept up a heavy fire of musketry, grape shot and shells for three previous nights on the engineers, sappers and peasants, while the works slowly proceeded. Five men were killed, and about fifteen wounded in this service ; but the General would admit of no delay for more favourable weather, being fully persuaded that he was going the shortest and safest way to work to stop the effusion of blood before Bilbao. Several officers of experience and ability were however of a different opinion (amongst others Lord Ranelagh), and entreated him to continue as he had so happily begun, and take the other smaller forts yet garrisoned by the enemy in the immediate neighbourhood, especially the fortified convent of St. Nicholas del Desierto, Portugalete and Fort St.

Roque all which commanded the river and might in his hands completely prevent the arrival of any succours from sea. There were also the hill-forts of Miravalles, Morroalto and Morrobajo, with the church of Begoña, lying around the town and commanding it on the other three sides, (although they, like the three river forts were all commanded by higher hills,) inviting his attention and incapable of making any effective defence if exposed to a cannonade from above. With these outworks in his possession, which Eguia might easily have reduced while his name was up as "a taker of strong places," he might have bid defiance to the severest assaults of winter and Espartero. The Urbanos, shut out from all supplies of provisions, intelligence and hopes of relief, would doubtless have soon surrendered; and the Carlist army, unthinned by the guns of the besieged, might have marched under Eguia to Madrid. But who can see clearly a day into the future?

Of all the outlying forts, that of Portugalete seemed of most importance to the besiegers to possess, and its comparatively defenceless condition after the fall of Burseña, might have rendered its capture almost a certainty, if a brisk attack had been made at the critical moment. Its garrison consisted of 800 men only. Don Castor commanded the entrance to the river, by which aid

might arrive from Santander or San Sebastian. Castro de Urdiales was the only open port adjacent, and Espartero was yet a week's march from thence. Commodore Morales finding that his *Trincaduras* stood no chance of success in a warfare with the mountains, and that the Guerillas on Monte Aspe, Ondis and Lexona, were daily wounding his sailors; seemed to give up the idea of doing any good with their artillery afloat, and was seen unshipping them; evidently preparing for a stand on shore, and strengthening Fort Desierto, which soon showed seven heavy pieces pointing towards Luchana, Sestao and Monte Aspe, where the Carlists began to appear in force on the day after the capture of Burseña. The calibre of these were soon found by the economical Carlists (who never suffer a cannon-ball-visitor to lie rusting,) to be two of 32, one of 24, two of 18, two of 9 and a mortar that could salute Las Banderas. All the small craft of the river were moored beside the quay under the fort, and the garrison stood warily on their defence, cannonading the hills wherever a Carlist appeared. Sixty of the rebellious Legionites were drafted hither in exile from St. Sebastian. A couple of them, roved out "fresh" one day to plunder the peasantry of Baracaldo, and got shot of course.

It was certain that up to this period (the 13th November,) Eguia seriously contemplated an attack

on Desierto and Portugalete. Preparations were made for planting guns both on the hills of Sestao and on Monte Aspe. Two hundred Algerines were quartered in the village of Sestao, and the rumour of the intended attack having reached Portugalete, fourteen of its armed Urbanos and twenty-eight others unarmed, deserted to them on the 14th. Unfortunately Eguia changed his plans the night before, and the escapade was fruitless—worse indeed for those individually concerned—for the cause being notorious, the Christino Governor confiscated their property by proclamation.

In the mean time every precaution was taken to retard the arrival of Espartero. The road from Valmaceda to Portugalete was cut across in several places, and the arch of the bridge between Zamarosto and Onton was broken. Don Castor Andechaga occupied the latter district, while Villa Real's force (all that Eguia could spare,) united with the remnant of that which Pablo Sanz and Joaquin Elio brought from the Asturias, endeavoured to draw the Christino General into combats in positions where his superior forces would avail him little; but the latter cautiously refused every offer of an encounter. If his troops only saw the Carlist General's staff and a reconnoitring party of forty horsemen approaching, they fled in all haste to concentrate for the expected attack. Villa Real felt so



much at his ease, that he came with his staff on the 16th from Zudope to Olaveaga to see the operations, preparatory to the grand attack.

Up to this day, the garrison had received no intelligence of Espartero's approach. During the entire siege they were able to obtain a small supply of provisions nightly over the walls, but strange as it may appear, they never could procure any intelligence from the country people! They depended solely on the information conveyed by Captain Lapidge's telegraph on Fort Desierto. On the 16th, the British and Spanish colours hoisted on the Estrella battery there, conveyed the tidings of the march of the army to their relief. A gun from Miravalles acknowledged the intelligence, and all was hope and obstinacy within the town again.

However, the preparations on the river and the roads at each side of it appeared very sufficient against any attempt that Espartero would be likely to make, to break through the army of the besiegers. The broken bridge of Luchana cut off the lower road from the sea to Oleveaga. Behind it, on the narrow causeway under the perpendicular side of Monte Cabras, breastworks were thrown up, extending from rock to river (about twenty feet in breadth) and an eight pounder planted to fire on any *Trincadura* that might venture so far up the Ria; two others of similar calibre were stationed on

the hills above,—one on Monte Areagas, the other in Fort Banderas, both bearing on the broken bridge and the lower reach of the river thence to La Desierto. Then on the opposite (western) bank, where there seemed most danger of Espartero attempting to force his way across the bridge of Castrejana, Don Castor Andechaga held the mountains with his active Biscayan Guerillas and felt himself quite at home. On the day that Eguia stormed Las Banderas and hunted the flying garrison of the Capuchin convent, Don Castor was hunting a corps of Christinos on his own account above Castro Urdiales, and captured the Commandante, two lieutenants, thirty soldiers and fifty-four muskets.

The night of the 16th November was one of anxious preparation. The garrison at intervals threw shells and grape-shot amongst the Carlist engineers and *paysanos* who were endeavouring to complete the batteries and bringing up ammunition for the morning's cannonade. The Christino gunners did not do as much mischief as they might; for they were rather economical of their fireworks, particularly in the article of light balls, with which they appeared to be badly supplied: and consequently, their other gunnery was comparatively inefficacious at night. They were in fact firing by moonlight, which was continually obscured by fly-

ing showers. The Carlist camp presented a singular scene of bustle and sociability. The great arcade which surrounds the church at Deusto, was filled with a battalion of Castellians, making merry over their triumphs of the last week and their hopes of the morrow. Another of Navarre, in the convent of Los Capuchinos, above, were also keeping it up after their fashion, chorus-singing, shouting and joking with those in the plain below. The farm-houses on all the hills at this side of Bilbao were filled to overflowing with the forces concentrated by Eguia for the assault, and even those under the walls were taken possession of, not only for the comfort of "dry lodging," but the convenience of exchanging shots with the artilleros within and the sharp-shooters in the convent St. Augustin adjoining. As I passed the houses of the bivouac, the sounds of revelry everywhere struck my ear;—singing and dancing, without the stimulus of wine or spirits of any kind but those that nature gave them. I only heard two instances of "instrumental music," one, which I thought to be a bagpipe deprived of its drone, but which on inspection I found to be a species of simple pipe or flageolet, made of a cow's horn, and played with the mouth, upon some principle which could not be investigated without disturbing the merriment of the company. The other, in the open air, as a party proceeded in slow

march down the mountains, and which I mistook in the dark for a band of bagpipers, drones, trebles, chaunters, and all. But no, 'twas merely of a string of *carros* jolting down the rocks with cannon-balls from Elorrio, occasionally floundering in the mud, and marking all the variations in a bad mountain road by the altered tones of their moveable axles, which turned in a piece with the wheels, and are never greased by the proprietors, who pride themselves on this accompaniment quite as much as a French postillion does on his *queue*, an Irish peasant on his dunghill, or an English butcher on his vixen bull-terrier. Their tones differ with the weather and the road, sometimes such a continuous squeal is heard for miles on a good one, that you lose all patience and wish it broken up for their sakes ;—but when they get into the ruts the notes elicited are so comical, that a stranger cannot help laughing heartily, though the *paysano* drivers stalk along beside them all the time, as proud and as grave as peacocks.

So much was to be done before morning, and so much depended on it, that few eyes were closed that night in the Carlist camp. I found sufficient occupation for some hours in watching the magnificent effect of the large shells and light balls which fell amongst the trees in the beautiful Prado of the Campo Valentino, where the besiegers were con-

structing their advanced battery right across the quay, for the destruction of the convent of St. Augustin. At length I returned with Senor —— to see a friend of his, who lodged on the river side at Duesto, and followed him in the dark up broken stairs and through a half ruined house, holding fast by his skirts, to avoid the unfloored places. All was darkness, till we found his friend with the only candle in the house (in his hand for want of a candlestick) rummaging amongst boxes on the floor, taking out and sorting parcels—they were cannon cartridges! 'Twas the artillery magazine! The long wick of the candle was snuffing itself occasionally in half-consumed fiery dust, as the store-keeper went through his searches, swearing endless *carajos* at some priming-powder which he could not find, but still continued digging into each *caisson* in quest of it; for the engineers wanted to do something in the way of retaliation at the gate of St. Augustin. My companion augmented the risk to trebly X trebly hazardous by pestering the searcher to search for a *Ferrol*.—"Ferrol, Amigo!" exclaimed the store-keeper, "*No 'sta in casa, ni en el campo!*" ("A lantern, friend! There is not one in the house, or in the camp either!") My first thought was to retire as I came, if I could but find my way; but the snuff threatened to decide the matter before I could accomplish it, even breaking

a leg or an arm by the way: my second impulse was to seize the candle and extinguish it; a temptation I fortunately overcame, or I might probably have been treated the same way myself the next moment as a Christino partizan: so I stood still, and pondered on the uncertainty of human life, till the priming powder was found and the retiring candle threw a passing ray over the holes in the passage floor, and adown the fenceless stair. I was in the fresh air in a hop, step, and jump;—and drew a long deep breath.—The candles used in the camp had the worst wicks I ever saw, yet not a magazine blew up during the entire siege!

"Such things may learned clerks explain,  
They pass the wit of simple swain."

As the bad state of the mountain roads seriously interfered with the arrangement of the guns and the distribution of the ammunition, several delays and alterations took place in the course of the morning of the 17th, and it was not until nine o'clock that the seven batteries opened as follows:—Comandante Trovo, with one twenty-four pounder close to the river in the Campo Valentino, directed against the Arsenal and the adjoining works on the Prado. Lieutenant Munuos to the left, with one gun of sixteen and two of eight, directed against the gate and convent of St. Augustin,—and Captain Idalgo in La Salve, adjoining, with one

ship gun of twenty-four bearing on both. The fourth battery, under Captain Plaza was fitted up against the town with the large mortar of fourteen *pulgados* diameter (thirteen French inches), another of seven *pulgados*; and two howitzers of the same calibre—the three latter for incendiary balls. The fifth, commanded by Colonel Urrutia, mounted a thirty-six pounder, a twenty-four, and a sixteen. The sixth battery, under Captain Simoas, contained one long twenty-four, one short twenty-four, and one sixteen pounder. All these were on the east of the river, beside the church of San Vincento de Abando. The seventh, was placed on the west, and confided to Captain Mello, who swept the opposite quay with one piece of eight, and another of six pounds. Those under Colonel Urrutia and Captain Simoas were especially directed against the higher forts, amongst which, two new lines were visible since Villa Real's attack, one running west across the steep ascent of the Esplanade, from fort Mallona to San Nicholas, mounting small guns, overlooking the town gate, and suburbs of St. Augustin; the other in the distant rising ground of fort Larrinaga on the south. The latter threw several shells; but owing to the imperfect view it had of the sunken suburb around which the chief cannonade took place, it soon ceased its fire; as it was found to be doing indiscriminate

mischief to both parties. The Christino fort of Miravalles also sent several grenades, but the range was too distant, and the majority flew wild, or exploded in the air. The field-pieces, on the Esplanade, were, however, actively served against the batteries in the Campo Valentino that were effecting the breach,—(one of which under Lieutenant Munuos was within fifty yards of the wall) and did great mischief to the Carlist infantry who supported it. The casualties in these three batteries were serious, exposed as they were in addition to a heavy and incessant fire of musketry. Captain Idalgo was killed by a cannon ball; Comandante Trovo wounded in the head by a stone dashed from an adjoining wall; a Lieutenant of the Biscayan Sappers, wounded mortally; and several artilleros carried *hors de combat* from their guns. The battery to the south, and nearest to the former battery of Villa Real, at Ulibarri, being farthest from supplies and most exposed to the line of forts, fared the worst. One of its guns was dismounted early in the day, and another was stopped for some time for want of balls. Again, that on the river side, in front of the city battery, of the Arsenal where thirty-six pounders were mounted, suffered considerably.

The engineers were constantly in requisition, every where (except at the mortar battery, which



was admirably situated) reconstructing the works swept away by the incessant fire of the besieged. The latter were, however, so hard pressed, that they had no time or cannon-balls to spare for the spectators on the hills—although the latter were obliged to come down half-way to get a good view of the operations, on account of the heavy mists and frequent showers which swept over their summits from the sea, saturating the mountain sod, and chilling and drenching every one. If the lookers-on attempted to sit, it was on a sponge—if to stand, they felt chilled to statues, and besides became marks for the *tirailleurs*, who were employed in great force on the town walls; in fact, it was necessary to keep moving to keep the life in one. The mortar battery was right well worked by Captain Plaza. It was situated in a maize-field, one half of which was reaped, the other still standing above the Campo Valentino, between the two Ferrarias (Triboli and Goyerri) or iron smelting works, distinguished by very tall chimneys. The scattered gourds and pumpkins which had grown and still remained on the reaped portion, presented a singular appearance. Looking down from the hills, one could imagine them to be huge easter-eggs, dyed of all the fashionable colours of the old festive time,—green, yellow, buff, striped, speckled, and piebald, left lying there as if the old Ogres

and Giants of Spanish romance had just been scared away in the midst of a *fête champêtre*, by the portentous thunder and lightning of these new-fangled engines of war. The Carlist shells were thrown with terrible effect into the town forts. The besieged filled the turrets and upper galleries of the church of St. Augustin with infantry, as they had done in the previous siege with such deadly effect against the artilleros; but the Carlist guns in Lt. Munuos' battery soon knocked down the upper half of the northern wall of the cemetery, and compelled them to abandon that part of the church. His cannon, however, played upon St. Augustin, and the adjoining outworks, at disadvantage; for, having been armed in darkness, under a heavy fire from the walls, it had only been brought to bear on an angle of the convent. A practicable breach in a house adjoining the convent gate, was however, reported at noon to the General, who instantly concentrated his forces in that quarter, and ordered the assault; which was gallantly entered on by the Foreign Legion. The fire of musketry was at this period maintained at each side with singular ardour; by the garrison holding an extensive front of houses, and by the assailants whilst taking possession, step by step, of the ruined streets and walls immediately beneath. The breach was in the first story of a fortified house in the outer line

of the defences of the convent, through which the assailants entered by a scaling ladder; their opponents escaping before them over roofless walls, and taking refuge in the convent and higher houses behind, which it now appeared formed the real line of defence. About one hundred and fifty men who had entered here, now found themselves amidst four walls affording no exit, exposed to the shot and hand grenades of their enemies who commanded the position on every side; it was a complete *cul de sac*, and unfortunately not in the least available as a means of further entrance to the city. Here Lieutenant Adolphus D'Argy was killed, as he entered the breach, by the side of his brother Charles. He was struck, at the moment, by two balls in the head, and a third in the neck. He was one of the finest soldiers I have ever seen; tall, strong, and well-proportioned; and, with his brother, foremost in every danger. They were amongst the very few officers who had entered the breach at La Parra de Mallona, in Villa Real's recent siege. Adolphus was a man admirably calculated to command the unruly spirits whom he led—old soldiers, who had served their apprenticeship in Algiers, then graduated under Lebeau and Bernelle; and subsequently came as accomplished campaigners, to fight for Charles the Fifth. They are all brave by habit ("and

something more") and quite accustomed to drive the Spanish Christinos before them, whenever they met. D'Argy never carried anything when leading them into battle, but a stick to punish their excesses or deficiencies on the instant; except in a storming party, when he always took a musket. It is a singular fact that so much did his company value the strict discipline he enforced, if they saw him without a stick when the enemy was near, they hastened to cut one for him! Then they felt themselves invincible. The survivor Charles has been promised the ribbon of San Fernando. A Polish officer of the Foreign Legion, Lieutenant Zavazinski, was also mortally wounded there and died a few days after.

Soon after this fruitless attempt, it was proposed to remedy the indirect position of the battery under Lieutenant Munuos by bringing forward one of his eight pounders, and battering in the side door, which it was expected would lead certainly and directly into the interior of the place. This manoeuvre was executed with promptitude and determination, under a fire of musketry from the adjoining walls, (only a few paces off) by Captain Vial and a few artilleros. Two shots were fired through the door, and Captain Vial was in the act of loading it for a third, when he received a ball in the thigh; the sergeant of the gun was shot at the same mo-

ment, two others were wounded, and the rest fled. A volunteer reinforcement was soon afterwards brought up by Count Mortara, who dashing on, accompanied by Lord Ranelagh and Count Valdeck, retook the gun and carried off Captain Vial<sup>1</sup>. His wound was so serious that it was found necessary he should suffer amputation. The operation was skilfully performed by the Surgeon-in-chief, Obrador, a French student who had practised and also taught surgery in Madrid previous to the war. The fate of this young officer excited universal commiseration. He had already acquired considerable reputation by his gallant conduct in Guipuscoa, and at his first appearance in the besieging army was distinguished as the individual who was nearest to the convent of Burseña to receive the capitulation of the Christino Commandante. He was one of the most valuable Ayudantes of General Guibelalde, and since his arrival had been indefatigable in the service of Eguia, by whom his loss was seriously felt.

The survivors of the gallant Foreign Legion still continued to hold the house they had won so dearly, and the cannonade on the walls at the gate of St. Augustino was kept up unremittingly by Munuos,

<sup>1</sup> For this gallant act, Count Mortara received the Cross of the 1st Class of San Fernando.

Trovo, and Mello. About four o'clock another breach was reported practicable, and General Sylvestre of the Engineers, received Eguia's order for the assault. I understand that some doubt existed in this department as to the extent and efficiency of the second breach, and time was consumed in further inspections, reports and additional cannonading till the daylight had nearly departed, and it was then judged too late to attempt to enter the town by storm, the fire of the batteries ceased, and the troops retired to their quarters for the night.

The garrison probably expecting another night assault, wrought incessantly to repair their damages with sand bags, &c. They kept a sharp look out, and firing at intervals killed one man and wounded four; on the previous night while placing the guns in the six batteries, two men were killed and twelve wounded. The entire loss on the 17th of November (during which both infantry and artillery were constantly under a heavy fire, and 100,000 cartridges were discharged by the former,) was three officers and twenty-six privates killed; ten officers and forty-eight privates wounded. Amongst those wounded in the assault at the breach was young Captain Villiers of the Engineers, who distinguished himself so much in the previous October storming party. He was at the head of the last assault as conducting Engineer

when he received a ball through his arm. His wound was immediately tied up by Lord Ranelagh and Captain Rubichon of the Lancers (who distinguished himself so much during the late war in Portugal) who had just arrived on leave from Durango to witness the siege. Captain Rubichon was actively engaged in the batteries all day, particularly at that of St. Vincento de Abando on the west of the river, which suffered most of all from the fire of the Arsenal and the adjoining quay. Nearly forty vessels large and small, lay there, ranged along the Prado; one, with a white flag displayed. I could not perceive that any had suffered damage, although the garrison on shore were incomprehensibly firing a field-piece right across the deck of that distinguished by the flag, as if to invite its destruction or prevent the possibility of any recognition of the conventional language of peace or neutrality. Eguia on his part maintained the strictest blockade after the murder of his Parlamentario. Another dispatch was to have been carried to the French Consul the same day, but on learning the fate of his Ayudante, the General cut off all communication with Bilbao.

Serious injury must have been done to the town by the cannonade of the 17th. I counted above thirty cannon-shot in the corner of a house on the quay, inside the battery of the Arsenal, which only

presented two windows at the angle looking to the gate of St. Augustin. Before night closed my view, the town was completely obscured by the smoke of houses smouldering with the half-extinguished fires caused by the shells and grenades. The loss outside the town also was more serious than in the commencement of the last affair. The evening of the 17th of Nov. there were in the hospitals 87 officers and men wounded, the majority seriously, as, firing from behind walls or parapets, the shots were all received about the head, neck, or breast: perhaps a third of that number in addition were killed in the batteries and at the assault.



## CHAPTER XV.

ON the night of the attack, (the 17th Nov.) heavy rain set in, which continued for three days, so that it was impossible to proceed effectively with the siege. On the morning of the 18th news arrived that Espartero, strongly reinforced, had left Zuporia, and was within five leagues, approaching by Castro and the coast, towards Portugalete, to make if possible a combined movement with the forces there, and throw succours into Bilbao.

This intelligence determined Eguia to attend to him in the first place, and meantime to change the siege into a blockade. He instantly dispatched four battalions to Castrejana to join those under Pablo Sanz and Elio, who having united with Villa Real, were protecting the siege. The latter, with his hands thus strengthened, moved to Alonzetegui, where he occupied himself in harassing Espartero, who was moving from Laredo towards Castro de

Urdiales, and in cutting off his progress, whether over land to Bilbao or by sea to Portugalete, and in endeavouring to get him to commit himself in a battle. This Espartero prudently avoided, although reinforced by troops detached from the corps of Alvarez, Captain General of Old Castile, and in command of fifteen battalions, or between 12,000 and 13,000 men. He is represented to have written to Colonel Wylde, that he was coming with 18,000. He reached Castro Urdiales from Guriezo on the 20th of November, (all his artillery left behind for speed and safety,) when Don Castor absolutely stopped his further passage to the Ria Nervion. Brigadier-General Castaneda preceded him with 2000 men to Onton, about two leagues from Portugalete, but there he found sufficient occupation for some time in mending the bridge which Don Castor had broken. It is uncertain how long Espartero might have remained at Castro if the English steam-boats had not come to his aid. On the 22nd of November the *Comet* and *Salamander* with about thirty launches in tow, took on board 3500 of his troops and 300 horses, and conveyed them to Santurce and Portugalete. Amongst these were General Escalera and Colonel Munni-sir, who, next day directing their attention against the feeble garrison of 300 Carlists left at Santurce, obliged them to retire and join Don Castor at

Zamarosto. On the 25th, 2000 Christinos marched westward out of Portugalete to open the road for Castaneda and Espartero. The latter at the same moment marching eastward from Castro, obliged Don Castor to fall back and stand inactive, to avoid being taken in rear whichever he might oppose. The Christino forces then uniting their strength, marched safely into Portugalete.

During these movements, the remainder of the Carlist battalions were protecting the batteries which Eguia was hourly labouring to repair, notwithstanding the continual cannonading of the garrison, and the incessant rain, nearly as destructive in its effects on the rudely constructed breastworks. The Urbanos, on their part, strengthened their battered walls to the uttermost, fired at every thing that stirred within musket shot, and surmounted the breach near the gate of St. Augustin with a death's head and crossbones painted on a board, with this inscription, "*Transito de la Muerte!*" (The passage of Death.)

Even at this period they were beginning to find their provisions running low, and the garrison was put on short allowance, namely, half a ration of bread, with beans in place of beef for their *puchero*. They had still, however, plenty of wine and *aguardiente*. They never at any period appeared deficient in vigilance, and frequently made sorties, as

if to discover any want of it on the part of the besiegers. On the 18th they pushed out two reconnoissances on the side of Morro and Mirra-valles to learn what force was at that side, but Don Castor's guerillas instantly repulsed them with the loss (as a prisoner informed him) of six wounded in the first, and of one killed and twenty wounded in the second sortie.

The chances of war place many novelties before our eyes; amongst others, literature of very peculiar pretensions. I met with three amusing specimens one day shortly after the assault of the 17th, all of which must be placed to the credit of the garrison of Bilbao; *imprimis*, half a dozen sheets of Carlist cartridge paper, which on careful inspection, appeared to be the substance of a pamphlet, printed, as the title-page informed us, "for account of the editor at Bayonne, 1836," and entitled, "A Luminous Guide for the British Co-operative Forces in Spain on the principal Subjects connected therewith, with Particular Information relative to the Basque Provinces; by Solero Goecoechea, Knight and Lieutenant in the National Guard." Then follows a modest announcement, obviously a great improvement on the round-about way which some cockney authors take of impressing their readers with a similar idea, namely, "This guide is incalculably superior to anything

of the kind, being principally the result of personal observation. The author."

So much for the title-page. The introduction is worthy of it. I at first thought it was intended as a Carlist quiz on Christino grandiloquence, but I was assured that it issued from the press with all possible gravity. I transcribe the first paragraph, *verbatim et literatim*, (which the corrector of the press is by no means to attempt to "do into English,") namely, "Every Spaniard possessing feelings of honesty and noble gratitude, must be thoroughly convinced of the magnanimous resolution taken by the gallant individuals of the British co-operative forces in hasting themselves to the scene of civil contest, to defend by the sacrifice of their blood the sacred cause of liberty, so closely connected with the throne of young Queen of Spain, Elizabeth IInd. Full of glorious emulation, their only wishes are directed to fight for so valuable and ravishing object. The honourable and gallant member for Westminster, who so generously has placed himself at the head of such handsome body of Englishmen has deserved well of his own country, where the good feelings and good wishes of the people are embarked in the prosperous success of the cause he has so warmly spoused." Then follows a chapter entitled, "A rapid sketch on the actual disastrous civil war, the

way the Carlists carry it, and the possible moral and effective means to stop the progress of the enemy;" in which after a very rapid sketch indeed, the author discharges the following broadside:—

"The partisans of Don Carlos, and leaders of this unhappy war are, *therefore*, a compound of ignorance, fanaticism, want, misery, and distress, of all that is disgusting and depraved; thieves, vagrants, robbers, and murderers, wicked and desperate individuals." The author can find no adequate remedy to prescribe for all this, but "retaliation," which recommendation following closely on the picture he has drawn of all that is disgusting and depraved, affords another sad illustration of the effects of civil war, and the tendency of poor humanity to cherish a beam in its own eye while denouncing the mote in a brother's. Then follows some valuable "bell-the-cat" advice on the defensive details, which, in this volume, relate only to Biscay, namely, "It would be urgent to enforce without the least regard or consideration whatsoever, the so often-repeated order issued by our civil and military authorities all over the country, or, at least, to all the cantons surrounding Bilbao and the principal towns, that, under the shortest time possible, they are to cut down or destroy all woods, thickets, bushes, hedges and walls, at a distance of eight hundred feet on both

sides of the highways, roads, byways and principal defiles round their respective limits." This good advice would take even the back woodsmen of Kentucky three generations to execute. But not even the noisy Christinos of Bilbao would shake the laziness out of their bones, and make a beginning with the walls under their own gate of St. Augustin, where the Carlist guerillas took shelter; or cut down the trees in the Campo Valentino, only fifty yards off, where the breaching battery of Eguia was planted. Again,—

"It being an uncontradicted fact that the Carlists are supplied from Bilbao and other chief towns of every necessities, such as tobacco, oil, salt, brandy, linen, as also ammunitions, it would be convenient to the good success of the Queen's cause that the exportation of every such articles should be prohibited whilst under the present circumstances, except what may be directed for the use of the people living within fortified places, and where the Queen's orders are obeyed." This advice was not very explicit; but Eguia interpreted and fulfilled it with a vengeance. He not only executed the Queen's orders to let nothing out, but neither would he let any thing in! Again, he paid due observance to the author's advice, namely, "All kinds of subsistences the enemy may make use of, ought to be taken all over the country," &c. In

short, he only was acting, while the Christino author and his friends at Madrid were writing, speechifying, decreeing and constitution-making; so that if Col. Wylde and Lord John Hay had not interfered, he would have saved them all further trouble respecting the province of Biscay.

The next series of literary articles met my eye in the captured convent of Burseña, whither I walked the morning of the 22nd of Nov. to see "the way the Carlists carried it." I took extensive notes of the effusions of Christino disloyalty, irreverence and sentimentality, scribbled with charcoal on the walls and with chalk on the beautiful pictures of the grand altar of San Francisco de Abando; but the entire, on review, presented such a mass of bad taste and bad feeling, such an outpouring of the language of "retaliation," in the "disgusting and depraved" style (which in Spain knows no medium, but selects the representations of "the adoration of the shepherds," "and the wise men's offerings," as its altars of profanation),—that I had no heart for the task of selection amongst what only presented a variety of bad, worse, worst,—and committed the collection to the fire.

A specimen of the third literary series came dancing before my balcony the same morning, on the full tide of the Ria Nervion: it arrived in rather



an uncommon conveyance—a butter-firkin painted white, with a staff erect through the bung hole (where somebody had neatly fastened it with putty), bearing a fluttering fragment of red cloth to attract attention,—something in the style of a wild Irish Ribbonman's expedient to invite a challenge at fair or market. On the head was nailed a card (the ten of clubs), with the appropriate inscription—"Enquire within." Count Valdeck did inquire with the hilt of his sword, and found an open unsigned *cartel*, written in a neat Spanish hand, addressed to "Captain Lapidge, Brig *Ringdove*," dated "Monday evening, November 21, Bilbao," and commencing very familiarly with a free translation of the invariable "*Apreciable Amigo*:" viz. "Dear Lapidge,—The telegraph you have erected on La Desierto is too much to the right. It should be placed more to the eastward, to be seen from hence. Make it work, and let us have news. A Spanish flag on Miravalles (or any other better point you indicate), will prove that the signal is seen.

"When do our well-wished for friends come?"

A second, third, and fourth of exchange floated in sight subsequently, each bearing its billet to "Dear Lapidge."—Each was doubtless sent down the ebb tide, the night before, from Bilbao; all had floated up again with the return, and the literary fleet was sailing down again in the morning, to

force the Carlist lines once more, when we caught sight of them.

On the same day, November 22nd, at noon, Eguia resumed his operations against the convent of St. Augustino, notwithstanding the heavy passing showers. The battery at Campo Valentino, under Lieutenant Munuos, mounting one sixteen pounder and two four pounders, was directed against it in flank; while that of La Alvia, adjoining the church of San Vincento de Abando, on the west side of the river, took it in front. This latter battery had meantime been strengthened, under the care of Captains Mello and Simoas, and then mounted a long twenty-four pounder, a twenty-four pounder carronade, and three others of sixteen, eight, and four. Soon after they began to play against the convent, a heavy mist fell from the mountains upon the town and suburbs. A breach was, however, reported at a quarter before three o'clock, and the battalions of the third of Navarre, and part of the first and fifth of Biscay, advanced to the assault; but the mist increased rapidly to a downright fog, till the men could not see what they were firing at, or where to go, and the general prudently withdrew them. The garrison of the convent made a sortie, in the midst of the attack, and a fierce but brief combat ensued, ending in the hasty retreat of the Christinos, and

in which it was believed they must have had near a hundred men killed or disabled. The Carlists lost in the batteries, the assault, and the sortie, twenty-five killed and thirty-three wounded,—amongst whom were five officers. The wounds were, however, almost all mortal, as indeed were those received in the previous attack, having been inflicted by hand-grenades, and grape shot, on the upper part of the body. The principal work was, however, between the artilleros on either side. Those of the town proved that they were not to be despised, and early produced an impression on the battery of Santo Vincento, dismounting three of its guns, and wounding several men. The other two, however, still kept up their fire; and, with the aid of the battery of Lieutenant Munuos (who was slightly wounded), succeeded in effecting the breach; but the density of the fog prevented all further operations.

The convent, although in ruins at the north-eastern extremity, certainly stood very much in the way of the besiegers. Eguia declared that it must be got possession of before they could occupy that suburb to any useful purpose. Once *bonâ fide* lodged there, he calculated that they would have little to fear from the heavy guns of the Arsenal, and others planted on the quay between the gates, which at every opportunity co-operated in the de-

struction of the Carlist batteries, but which were only capable of annoying assailants who stood outside of the convent. The building was, however, very strong, and so surrounded by houses, that the General found it a tedious work to batter it sufficiently for his purpose. It was easy enough to demolish its superficial upper works and accessories, but the Basque churches are all solidly built within, arched with stone over nave and choir, and very little affected by bombardments, at least such as had hitherto been directed against them. There were many other accessible and less knotty points around the town, which the General might have dealt with instead; but as he could not overlook the probability of Espartero's making a strong and sudden effort to raise the siege now that he was reinforced,—he cautiously kept his guns in the way before the gate of St. Augustin, on the very road along which the troops must march from Portugalete to enter the town. Any steam-boat that might attempt to force an entry, would also have to paddle close before the mouths of all his guns and mortars, a passage which he endeavoured to render as difficult as possible, by the interposition of some chain-cables of Bilbao wrought iron.

The injuries which the batteries received in the attack on the morning of the 22nd, are in part to be attributed to the previous bad system of confiding

the night works about the batteries, their formation, repairs, &c. to the old *paysanos*, who would rather have been excused this species of labour, and not to the young soldiers, who would gladly have undertaken the job. A peasant, the father of a family shattered by grape-shot, is a sorrowful sight; the soldiers however thought nothing of wounds; so Eguia and the Marquis de Valdespina laid their heads together, and arranged the matter to the satisfaction of all parties. The peasants were relieved from their quota of labour, whenever they pleased, by the payment of a peseta (10d.) to a soldier in lieu of it, day or night. One peasant was killed the night of the 21st, and four wounded, in the alteration of the batteries: I believe they were the last.

The failure of this second attack on the town was deeply felt. Numbers of spectators had gathered from the surrounding country (as they had in the previous affair of the 17th); but the heavy mist obscured all view of the operations, either offensive or defensive, and little could be seen but the successive litters of wounded emerging from the suburb. I descended from the hills to the river side, in hopes of seeing more clearly what was going on; but the mist had taken possession of the low ground also. I found the boatmen all on the alert, disregarding the cannonade and straining their eyes to find anything afloat smuggling letters

from Bilbao to Fort Desierto, having already captured the four audacious butter firkins that were endeavouring to break through the lines, bearing *fac simile* hints to Captain Lapidge for the improvement of his invisible telegraph.

They caught just then a large dead pig, floating down, which they cut up, but found no enclosures. At this period, Lord Ranelagh and Count Valdeck were sent by Eguia with instructions, across the river to the Abando batteries; and I accompanied them to obtain, if possible, a better sight of St. Augustin. We found in passing the balls breaking the tombstones of the English officers buried in the *presque-isle* of La Alvia. "You will not get a good view of the effects of the cannonade from any side to day," said Lord R. to me, "especially from the battery before us; for the Urbanos make it a point that nobody shall peep over the parapet without losing his eyesight. You are the historian of the siege, and there's no occasion for you to be silenced, like the twenty-four pounder there. You'd write a very lame account of it with your arm in a sling, or your eye out, or your head in your hand; so get up instead into that tall house that overlooks the battery (the head-quarters of the Alvia artillery), where perhaps you may see something above the mist. We will join you there, after seeing all right at the battery."—"If not," said

Count V., "recollect to write a handsome notice for our obituary, and to look out for some more quiet and comfortable burial place for us, than that we have just passed." So they went on, joking as usual, "even to the cannon's mouth;" while I, preferring their advice to their example, got up to the *granero* in the roof of the tall house in search of my view; but all was mist both above and below. Returning with them, subsequently, along the river side, to a spot where a boat awaited us, I stopped for a moment to cut one of the long canes peculiar to the country, and which we found of especial use in our wanderings by mountain and river,—being exceedingly light in proportion to its strength, serving not only as a staff in the dusk, and a probe in the mud or sand, but also as a very portable mountain-support for a telescope,—which unless steadied by its aid (like the transverse piece of St. John's cross), would be frequently rendered useless by the wind. (The peasantry cultivate them to form *trellices*, or *parras*, to sustain their vines at four or five feet distance from the ground, to admit air and light beneath; but, so powerful are the countervailing influences of the mountains, and the cold and rain they induce, that the vine of Biscay, although receiving perhaps more careful culture than any in Spain, produces the worst wine I have ever tasted.) I had scarcely walked off three steps

with my staff, when a cannon ball from the town plunged into the cane plot through the very place where I had stood, mowing down the rank of which I had carried off the flank man! Had I been half a quarter of a minute more dilatory, I certainly should have seen very little more of the siege. The cannon balls were, indeed, every day playing singular freaks over hill and valley. A young officer was the same day shot dead, as he stood beside Eguia, at the floating bridge under Santo Mames, —half a mile further than shot was ever known to range from the city.

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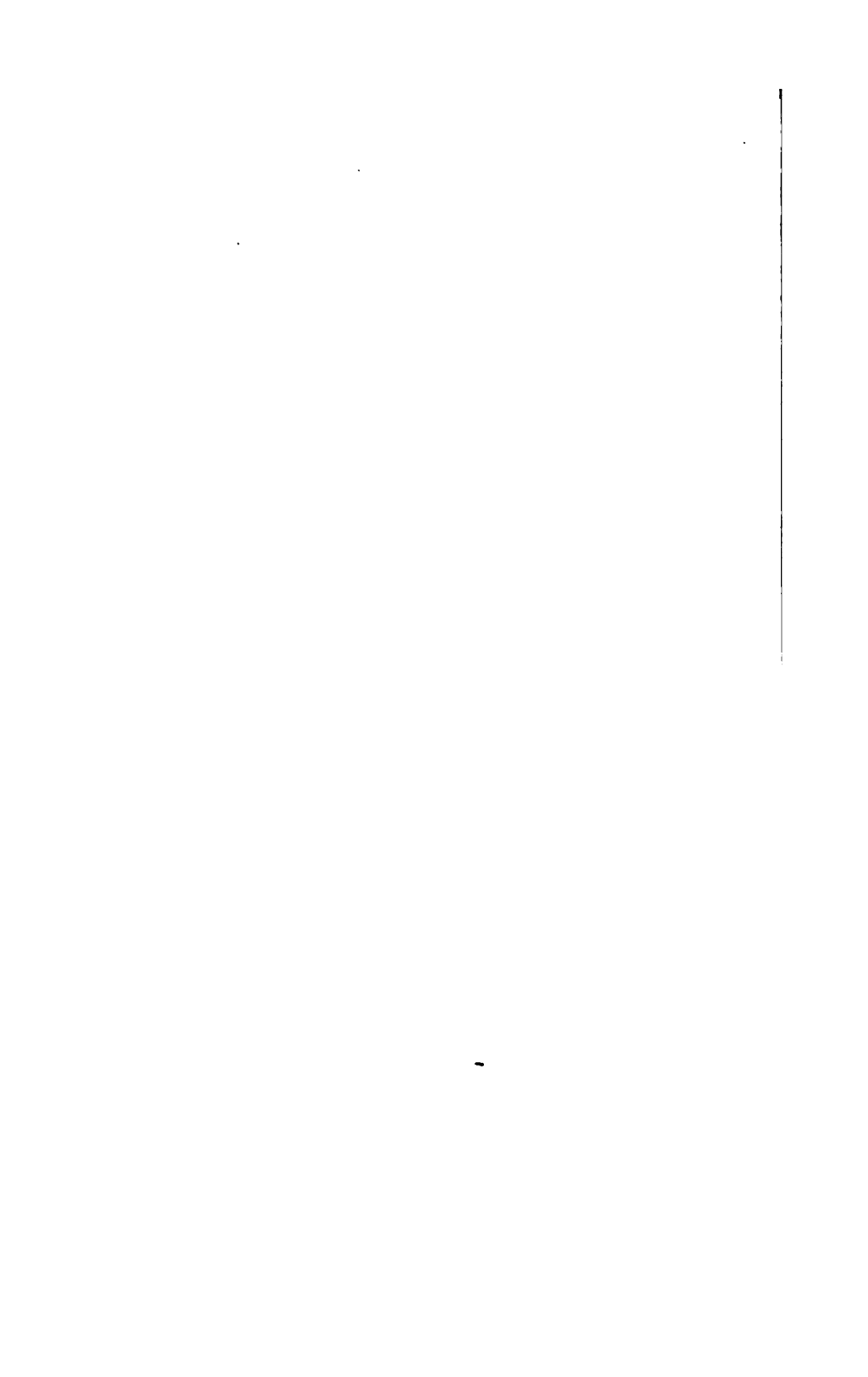
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THE  
BASQUE PROVINCES:  
THEIR  
POLITICAL STATE, SCENERY, AND INHABITANTS;  
WITH  
ADVENTURES  
AMONGST THE CARLISTS AND CHRISTINOS.

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BY  
EDWARD BELL STEPHENS, Esq.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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THE  
BASQUE PROVINCES.

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CHAPTER I.

THE Christino operations for the relief of Bilbao now came within the view of the besiegers, and rendered the contest doubly interesting. On Saturday the 25th November, we could perceive from the Banderas, that two companies from Portugalete had entered the convent of San Nicolás del Desierto, that its telegraph was actively at work, and that a bridge of boats and *trincaduras* was in progress on the south, over the estuary (the Ria Galinda) which separates it from the village of Baracaldo. This was completed the next morning, and the road was thereby opened for the Christinos to the next estuary, the Ria Salcedon.

While these preparations were going on, the Carlists set fire to their late acquisition, the empty convent of Burseña on the northern bank of the last-mentioned Ria, and partially broke down the suspension bridge which connected it with the southern bank, so that their guerillas might pass over by clinging to the chains, which were allowed to remain at one side, but which hostile feet dare not attempt, in whatever force they might arrive. (*Vide Appendix.*)

On Sunday morning the 26th November, at day-break, a column of 12,000 Christinos, led by Espartero, Oraa, and the Baron de Meer, marched out of Portugalete; and, ere the last had left it, extended along the river to the convent of San. Nicolás. Crossing the promontory of Desierto, they passed over the bridge of boats, and the heights above Baracaldo; while the Carlist guns at Banderas, Monte de Cabras, and the Baya Saroza, kept up a brisk fire at them across the Ria Nervion. They marched right to the convent, extinguished the flames, and attempted to take possession of the bridge, in hopes to render it passable; but the Carlists had arranged every thing their own way, and they were a day too late. However, they planted a couple of field pieces, and endeavoured to drive away from the bridge-house, the guerillas who defended the chains and tottering planks, but without effect. They then marched further inland,

along the Ria Salcedon, trying to cross by fording at Quadra; but, beaten back every where, they marched on to the bridge of Castrejana (a single stone arch, in a deep valley under the church of St. Agatha), over which Espartero had vainly attempted to force his way, to raise the first siege of Bilbao in the time of Zumalacarregui. He knew the ground very well, and drove in Castor's guerillas like a man determined to have his own way this time. His lancers at first actually galloped at them; but they were soon glad to allow their own guerillas to take the precedence. About two o'clock in the afternoon, a grand rush was made to force the bridge: (the Carlists say that the Christinos always attack in the afternoon, that the approaching night may cover their retreat). Here Don Castor Andechaga made a stand and combined his forces with Sopelana, when a serious contest took place. The Carlist battalion of Guipuscoa reserved its fire till the Christinos came close down to the bridge; then poured a volley that sounded like a broadside, and made them halt and stagger. The Carlists were very steady, although both divisions concentrated here under the command of the General-in-chief, Villarreal, amounted only to 3,000 men (out of the 6,500 at his disposal) with two field pieces. The affair was soon decided by the battalion of Guipuscoa rushing over the arch and driving the

assailants up the heights again, where they encamped for the night, at a distance of above two miles from the bridge, having lost ten prisoners, thirteen mules laden with ammunition, and the carriages of their two field pieces. They either buried the guns somewhere during the night on their retreat, or carried them off on the backs of their baggage mules. The loss of the Christinos in this attempt, according to their admission to their English friends at Portugalete, was 300 in killed and wounded. Amongst the latter was General Castañeda, severely. The Carlist loss in wounded was twenty-seven officers, amongst them Captain Vial, of the Alavese (brother of the officer wounded before the gate of San Agustín), and eighty-two privates (forty seriously), but I believe none were killed. (*Vide Appendix.*)

Villarreal and his staff were everywhere—on the bridge, in the fire, and (quite as dangerous) in the previous reconnoitering parties, within pistol-shot of the Christinos, when I expected the latter would have made a dash, and either have killed or taken them all! But everything seems to go by contraries in Christino and Carlist warfare. An assailing force of 12,000 of the former, lose all courage after the first check of the guerillas of 3000 of the latter. As to the Carlist besiegers, they ought (according to the best tacticians) to have been

quite out of spirits, and ready to raise the siege at finding themselves placed between two fires thundering at each end of the valley of Duesto; while the garrison ought to have made a sortie, &c. Nothing of the kind! The garrison merely endeavoured to hold their own, blazing away inside the walls, while the Carlists' courage increased with the dangers of their position. While Villarreal was beating Espartero up the hill at St. Agatha, Eguia was assaulting the convent of San. Agustin, for the fifth time I believe. He had given the blockade of the convent to three companies of Arragonese, commanded by Captain Don Francisco Garcia, and had assured them that he would allow them to take it all by themselves without any Biscayan help. Being in high spirits, particularly flattered by the compliment, and cheered on by Don Juan de Bessieres of the Engineers, who had volunteered for the assault of the convent, they dashed at it at noon-day, and took it by surprise. The garrison made a desperate resistance; retiring from one apartment to another, defending each as long as they could, then escaping as they might, and finally making a stand in the church where a serious contest took place. None of the officers or old soldiers asked or expected quarter; and when the Carlists found themselves inside, only seventy-five were there alive to surrender at discretion.—



These were all boys, little removed from mere children, whose singular and pitiable appearance made the assailants pause and spare, the instant they laid down their arms. They stripped them, however, of course, and struggled their brawny shoulders into the superfine jackets of the boys;—then dashed on again, and took two strong houses in the adjoining street, the Calle de Sendeca. 71 of the prisoners were of the regiment of Compostella, and 4 of that of Truxillo;—the last remaining of those two fine regiments. (*Vide Appendix.*)

It appeared, that many of the Christino soldiers who were on guard there, had left their posts, and ascended to the belfry or to the hill fort within the gates, to obtain a sight of the distant combat. The Arragonese upon the watch, adroitly slipped into the convent, and took possession of it; its garrison, on their return, were repulsed, and fled towards the town. They were met by the astonished Urbanos,—the alarm was given, and every exertion was made to dispossess the captors. A large body of the Urbanos appeared, each carrying a straw mattress,—rushed into the church,—set fire to them under the wood work, and in a few minutes the whole interior of the magnificent building was in flames; the beautiful carved work, and every other combustible material, was consumed, and nothing remained but the massive walls filled with

dense smoke. This drove out the Arragonese, but they soon returned in force, before the Urbanos could be strengthened, and a desperate struggle took place upon the burning embers. Two officers of the Urbanos, Don Candido Pedronena, and the other Don — Gaminda, were killed, besides twenty-six of the privates. The garrison immediately turned their fire on the convent, and threw shell after shell, till they set it also on fire. The news flew like lightning to the Carlists at the bridge of Castrejana. They soon told it to the Christinos, and were henceforth all-conquering.

The next morning at daylight (Monday 27th), Castor, who had slept on the Christino side of the bridge, followed up his work of driving back Espartero and his forces; and while the Carlist guerrillas were gradually advancing, a steamer from Portugalete came dashing up the river, towing fifteen launches, and a *trincadura*;—cast anchor at the quay under fort Desierto, and there loosed off the boats, which were speedily rowed round the point into the Ria Galinda, and up to the pontoon bridge. There they received the wounded of the previous day's combat, and returned without delay to Portugalete. At this period Villarreal descended the hill above Burseña at the head of five battalions, forded the Ria Salcedon, and ascended the hill in the face of Espartero's retiring battalions.

These poured in a heavy fire which, strange to say, did not kill or wound any one. Villarreal and his staff rode in the very front all the time.

The Christinos now retreated hastily, but in good order, in two columns, by the same roads they came; burning all the houses in Baracaldo and Sestao, beside several *casarios*, in the most reckless and evidently despairing style of evacuation. This part of the country had not up to that moment been in the hands of the Carlists; but the Christinos were destroying all within their reach, as if they never hoped to repossess themselves of it. The Carlist army were furious at this atrocity; and it was feared that such a return for all their clemency would have a lamentable result for the Urbanos of Bilbao, or any Christinos taken prisoners in future conflicts. The Carlists had hitherto displayed extraordinary forbearance. All the prisoners taken by assault or otherwise, around Bilbao, during the siege, whether in the Banderas, los Capuchinos, San Mamès, Burseña, Sna. Agustin, or at the bridge of Castrejana,—had been spared; and in return, Espartero set the dwelling-houses of their friends and kindred in flames! But all, from the General to the private, were now dreadfully indignant, and threatened correspondingly<sup>1</sup>. At night

<sup>1</sup> The intelligent correspondent of *The Morning Chronicle* at Portugalete writes, on November 30 :—" Before recrossing the

Villarreal held all the positions at the Bilbao side of Desierto. The Infante Don Sebastian witnessed all the operations of both days, from the captured fort of the Banderas. (*Vide Appendix.*)

Believing the town must submit after this double victory, Eguia sent a *parlementario* to summon it;—to spare, if possible, the horrors of an assault. (*Vide Appendix.*) Don Luis Peseto, (the adjutant of General Sylvestre, who distinguished himself so much at the taking of San Mamés,)—delivered the message at the gates of San Agustin, and was informed that on the morrow an answer would be sent by General San Miguel. While in this dangerous vicinity, (for the garrison were firing shot and shells on the church and captured convent all day,) he was wounded by a shot; but it was believed accidentally. Another more serious accident took place in the battery of Uribarri that day: a caisson blew up, and wounded Colonel Benito Urrutia, a cadet, and nine men.

bridge of boats over the Galinda River, on the evening of the 27th, the Queen's troops set fire to the extensive village of Baracaldo; this was not done by order of General Espartero, but by individuals of the army, exasperated at finding the place deserted by the inhabitants, as was the case in every village and hamlet on the approach of the Queen's army. The very reverse occurs when the factious bands appear;—not only do the people remain in their houses, but the rebels are supplied with provisions and comforts, while the Christinos meet with nothing but bare walls."

10      CAPTAIN LAPIDGE'S CONSOLATION.

San Miguel never sent his promised reply ; having, meantime, received an assurance from Captain Lapidge's ever-consolatory telegraph (as we subsequently learned), that Espartero would immediately make another effort for his relief.

## CHAPTER II.

It may naturally be supposed that the proceedings of the British vessels of force in the river Nervion were a subject of much speculation and anxiety, both to the Carlist army and the few Englishmen who happened to be present at the siege. It may appear extraordinary now, but it is nevertheless certain, that the besiegers were willing to believe that the British flag would not be lightly endangered or committed in a mountain contest, and to hope that if they abstained from insult and injury, their forbearance would be appreciated and their hostility not be wantonly provoked. The extent of both will be best understood by the perusal of an extract from the admirable description of the peculiar circumstances of the case by a correspondent of *The Morning Chronicle* in a letter dated "Portugalete, November 11." The writer took an active

part in the operations for the relief of Bilbao, and was rewarded by the cross of San Fernando.

“The position of his Majesty’s vessels here, as well as that of the senior British officer commanding in the river, is peculiar, and I may say, critical. The space between the bar of Portugaleta and the fortified post of the Desierto, may literally be called a trap. It is impossible to get out of it under certain circumstances, which occur five weeks out of six at this season of the year. For instance, *when the bar is up*, as it is called in nautical language, it is impossible for a vessel or a boat to go out; and beyond the Desierto, nothing can proceed up the river under existing circumstances. His Majesty’s brigs *Ringdove* and *Saracen* are at this moment within the above-described trap, the sides of which yawn with cannon-mouths ready to send forth destructive thunder. The spring tides are over, and in forty-eight hours the mouth of the trap will be completely closed. Nothing else remains, therefore, than to fight right and left against batteries erected or erecting on each side of them. It is by no means improbable that with these advantages the Carlists may seriously injure, or perhaps disable, his Majesty’s vessels, without any other good result being obtained than a proof—perhaps a very severe one—of the bravery and devotedness of our naval officers.”

Feeling no little anxiety on the same subject myself, I (shortly after the capture of Burseña) rode with a friend around Monte de Cabras, and the causeway of Luchana, to learn the whereabouts of his Majesty's brigs *Saracen* and *Ringdove*, and ascertain "if their intentions were honourable" in their approach to the mountains. We found them lying to, among the restless Trincaduras, above and below Fort Desierto, apparently asleep—with only the old true blue cockade fluttering at the mast-head. The Carlists seemed asleep also,—in the confidence that John Bull would show fair play and have the candour to send his compliments up the hills in a broadside, if he intended to interfere again on shore in the family quarrel; meanwhile strict orders had been given by General Eguia not to fire on the British vessels on any account. We stopped at the door of the old auberge in the causeway to take a *longue vue* of the fort, and saw the Christino artilleros busy with the thirty-two pounders. The hostess popped her head out of the window above, and hearing our observations, got into the fidgets. "*Ellos tiran de tiempo in tiempo, Señores!*" said she impatiently. "They fire every minute from the fort at whatever appears on the hills or the causeway, and they keep one gun levelled to sweep the spot before my door just where you stand; and oh, if they miss you, they'll knock my house down!



*Santa Maria! Quita!*" We cantered off for the good of the house, and the shot came hopping after us just two seconds too late.

On arriving at Bayonne eight weeks afterwards, I learned to my great surprise that while his Majesty's brigs *Saracen* and *Ringdove* lay inoffensively in the river, apparently confiding in the well-known friendly disposition of the Carlists above, (who could easily have sunk them if they pleased,) the English crews were actually at work in Desierto, cannonading the *facciosos*! Such was old England's fair play in Spanish affairs,—according to the non-intervention policy uppermost in Downing Street! Fair play! non intervention! The words are astonished to find themselves in the same sentence. "God preserve us from our friends!" say the astonished Carlists: "we are able to deal with our enemies ourselves. Had we expected the English navy to take part against us on the heights of Monte de Cabras, we should have been better prepared, and not left the road open to them, as we did on Christmas Eve, to induce Espartero and his fellows to come and be beaten. *Otros dias, otras circunstancias!*"

I had intended to state in detail the several facts connected with this singular proceeding, but as I find them already in print in a very interesting letter from Lord Ranelagh to Lord

John Hay, I beg leave to refer the reader to it as an authentic and highly instructive statement. (*Vide Appendix A.*) His Lordship takes such a clear, right English view of the case, that I can add nothing to its forcible illustration of the very extraordinary policy pursued in the disposition of H. B. M.'s Naval forces.

As however, the besiegers were in a great degree of uncertainty respecting the intentions of their enemies, and as it was not at all improbable that the river would be made the grand line of operations for the relief of Bilbao, every care was taken by Eguia to accumulate obstacles in the path either of their steam-boats or *trincaduras*. Parapets were thrown up at Lexona where he intended to bring some guns to bear on Portugalete and Desierto, but the heavy metal of the latter fort soon levelled them, and this plan was given up. During the severe weather the floating-bridge which stretched across from Olaveaga to the convent of San. Mamès, was thrice broken up: the last time by the shock of boats which the garrison floated down against it, with the aid of the rapid ebb which prevails in this Ria. On that occasion the General himself rode to the spot, and not only issued orders for its reconstruction with hawsers and moorings that gave fair promise of not letting it loose in haste again, but stood by, and saw it done. He also set General Sylvestre to prepare a sunken bar of boats full of stones

across the Ria farther up towards the town, just opposite the church of Deusto; but the mountain floods, high tides and low ebbs disarranged the latter job;—the boats would not stay where they were placed; so General Sylvestre set to work driving a double row of piles diagonally across the river, in a ford near the same spot, to present a more steady array of impediments. Don Sebastian now resided in Olaveaga, and although he did not take any active part either against the town or the army approaching to relieve it, evinced great interest in the operations. He frequently visited the hospitals, inspected the accommodations and endeavoured to cheer the spirits of the sufferers;—attending the masses celebrated in their presence, and providing for their comfort by disbursements from his private purse. On the 21st November, I remember, he gave every wounded private a dollar, and every officer in the hospitals, six. These acts of kind and considerate attention produced the best effect; and severe as were the privations of the poor fellows who formed the mass of the army, I never heard a murmur amongst them; excepting indeed from Messieurs and Mynheers the Algerines, who had always some grievance to complain of,—above all, that their bravery was not appreciated:—so their chief consolation lay in celebrating their own valorous acts for the edification of all who would listen. Indeed I must do them the justice

to say, that if their other virtues had equalled their courage, they would have been worthy of the highest military honours that Don Carlos could bestow. They were foremost in almost every affair of danger, and had more officers and men killed and wounded amongst them, than any other corps of double their numbers engaged in the siege. But truth must be told: they were very fond of *vino-tinto*, *vino-blanco*, *chacoli*, *aguardiente*, &c., very fond of a quarrel afterwards, and gave their officers exceeding trouble to manage them. Some of these French officers were the finest looking men, and the most thorough-going soldiers I ever beheld.

On the 28th we received intelligence that Ituralde, his wife and daughter, with a Lieutenant-Colonel and five other officers had been surprized and taken prisoners at Araya, six leagues from Vitoria, by a noted Christino partizan, smuggler and thief, named Martin de Barea. This news caused a great sensation in the camp, as it was said that a second surprize could not have occurred accidentally, Ituralde having on the 18th of August previous lost 400 men between Sesma and Lodosa by a similar want of precaution. His wife was permitted shortly afterwards to come to the camp before Bilbao to endeavour to settle his affairs. She remained there some days, after which the

minister prudently directed her to reside at Aspeytia till the termination of the siege.

No answer arriving from San Miguel, the Carlists resolved to make the most of their time, and try if any impression could be made upon the old town at the west, where the low grounds of Albia stretched along the left bank of the river towards San. Mamès;—accordingly on the 29th of November, Eguia brought a couple of guns to bear on the garden wall of the fortified convent of Santa Clara de la Concepcion, outside the town, to the north, and made a trifling breach towards evening; but the garrison within kept up such a continuous fire on the spot, that all who attempted to enter were repulsed on the instant. The guns of the town were also directed against the assailants, and seriously interfered with their operations. Four Carlists were killed, and about a dozen wounded in this affair. The convent was a good position, and worth taking, as it would have opened Bilbao Veijo to the besiegers. Their battery was again at work the next day, but nothing effective was accomplished against Santa Clara; for thenceforward the operations of Espartero became so important, that every hand and gun which could be spared from the blockade was arrayed on the hills overlooking the approaches from Portugalete.

The bridge of boats which had been laid on the morning of the 27th of November, to enable Espartero to cross the Ria Galinda from Fort Desierto to Burseña, was withdrawn on Monday night, soon after the last of his two columns had recrossed it; and nothing was heard or seen of them on Tuesday till dusk, when it was perceived from the heights, that they were constructing another bridge of boats across the very mouth of the Ria Nervion, leading from Portugalete to the right or eastern bank. This bridge contained thirty-two gun boats, brigs and larger vessels. Soon after day-break the next morning (the 30th) a mass of troops, cavalry, infantry and artillery were seen to pass over it, and form on the sands before the Consulate House. It is believed that 12,000 men marched over this bridge that day, and it was known that Espartero expected 4,000 more from Valmaceda before he committed himself in the attempt to force the Carlist lines. These not arriving, he was obliged to attempt something with "the few he had."

The position held by the Carlist army on the heights of San Domingo and Archanda was magnificent, considered as the stronghold of a besieging army. On one side they could pounce upon Bilbao and on the Ria by which any supplies could reach it from the sea. On the other (to the east)

they could maintain their ground against any army of treble their amount, by the natural strength of their position—a range of steep sand-stone mountains, covered half way up with forests of oak, seamed with numerous ravines, scooped into quarries, and intersected by mule-paths, bad enough at the best, but which in winter (with a little engineering) would each become lines of ditches or redoubts, so deep, angular and ruddy are they. Then, below all, runs the grand debatable line, the *Ria de Asua*, from the broken bridge of *Luchana* up to the barricaded bridge of *Derio* in the valley, on the high road from *Bilboa* to *Munguia*; a distance of between six and seven miles. The bridge of *Asua* was also broken down—and no place between it and *Luchana* was fordable in the face of an enemy.

On these heights, and as guerillas in valleys and forests, were stationed fourteen battalions and sixteen pieces of artillery, ready to meet *Espartero* on any point he might endeavour to ascend; four more battalions of Biscayans under Major-General *Sylvestre* of the Engineers, with the remaining artillery watched *Bilbao*; while three battalions (the 2nd of Biscay, the 3rd of Castile, and the 2nd of Castile), with two squadrons of cavalry, returned from the *Asturias* under the command of Major-General *Pablo Sanz*, rested on

the hills over Saroza, guarding the western sides of the Ria Nervion and the important bridge of Castrejana. These battalions varied in number from 500 to 800 each. The dispositions were as follow, commencing with Montede Cabras, the most western point on the right of the river. At the debouchment of the Ria, a four-pounder was placed, commanding the bridge of Luchana and the bend of the Nervion towards Portugalete; below it, on the narrow road under the precipice, were a large twenty-four pounder and an eight-pound field piece awaiting any steamer or trincadura; on the heights to the east, were two eight-pounders and one three-pounder. The former exchanged shots with the Convent of Desierto; the latter annoyed Epartero's masses when they ascended the high table land of Ondis. The most northern corner of the Carlist positions was Monte Areagas, where one eight-pounder and one four-pounder were planted to prevent the occupation of the opposite heights and houses above Erandio. Next (following the course of the Ria, eastward) were the heights of Asua, where two four-pounders, a small mortar and a howitzer, both of seven pulgados, were planted for the defence of the village below. Again, on the height of *Molino à viento* (the wind-mill) was a thirty-six pounder, and at various points on the *Camino Real* (the high road) to



Munguia, was the great mortar of fourteen pulgados and two cannons, sixteen and eighteen pounders. The officers in command under Villarreal on the mountains were Brigadiers Garcia, Zaratiegui, Sarasa and Sopelana, with Colonels Neboà and Nogueruela (Sopelana commanded the reserve of three battalions of Alavese). The southern bank of the Ria Asua, adjoining the village of that name, was the only point of this long line on which the Carlists threw up any parapets for musketry, (with the exception of the narrow road on the bank of the Ria Nervion, where a bank was thrown across it under the precipice of Monte de Cabras.) There they mended some ditches and pierced a few field walls with loopholes, and there Colonel Casimir Ilserbe, with six companies of the sixth battalion of Biscay, were stationed as the advanced post to offer the first steady resistance, when the guerillas in Erandio and Lexona should be obliged to retire before the column.

On the evening of the 30th the Christino guerillas, which began to ascend the valley, or rather the lowest hills (for the ground falls inland from the bold shore above the sands), were promptly checked by four companies of Biscayan sharpshooters of the sixth battalion stationed at Lexona, and the result was that Espartero thought it pru-

dent to remain in Algorta that night. The garrison of Bilbao, who of course were made aware of the movement, and also heard the firing, probably thought that Eguia would be sufficiently occupied in defending his lines at Asua,—took heart, and made a sortie during the night (at two o'clock A.M., the 1st of December), for the recovery of their grand out-work, the convent of San Agustin within which the besiegers were preparing an extensive mine and new batteries for the demolition of their last defences, the wall of the town at the opposite side of the street. They issued from the gate of la Cujes and assaulted the convent, but finding its defenders on the alert and in force sufficient to punish their audacity, precipitately retired. Amongst the wounded in this affair were the Christino Generals San Miguel and Arraoz. Thus repulsed and disappointed in what naturally must have appeared to them the most favourable moment to make an impression on their assailants, they relinquished all hopes of prolonging their resistance by their own resources; and a deserter from the town assured us that if Espartero had not telegraphed his intention of making a second strong effort for their relief, they would at once have embraced Eguia's merciful proposition, and hastened to enter into terms, to save the city from the horrors of the anticipated assault.

At daybreak on the morning of the 1st of December, the Christinos were seen from the Banderas moving in masses inland; and ere the last had quitted Algorta, a dense column of smoke, tinged with the flame of the roof tree, rose from the houses where the ruffian incendiaries had slept. The first was that of the village *Cura*. This is the way in which the Christinos repay the rights of hospitality in their tours through the provinces. From what I saw of their infernal style of warfare while Espartero was before Bilbao, I was not surprised at the deep and settled hatred with which they were regarded by the peasantry, and the awful execrations which were poured out on their heads—the forerunners of vials of wrath, which deluge the earth with blood. But the folly of this species of “war to the cottage” is equal to its barbarity. The patriotic spirit of the Basque peasantry is the stronghold of Don Carlos. It is worth a treasury, a standing army, and a magazine to him. He has only to call on it for supplies, and it is granted with a readiness that realizes the fable of Fortunatus and the wishing cap. Every savage display of the common enemy replenishes his councils with new energy, his camp with new combatants, and his cause with new arguments and new successes. It is a process as natural as the progress of the seasons,—of seed-time, and of harvest—of crime, and of

retribution. The proud, hardy, vigorous peasant, turned out of house and home, proves a dangerous enemy in his own ravaged fields. The grandsire, tottering under the weight of years, infirmities, and the wreck of his homestead in search of a resting place, becomes a still more formidable foe by his influence amongst a simple, sensitive race who reverence age, abhor oppression, and

“With whom revenge is virtue.”

These are the feelings, roused into energetic action, that have made the Basque peasants conquerors in so many unequal contests. Looking at the result as a mere matter of tactics, I felt assured that both Oraa and Espartero must be the most stupid Generals in Europe, if their experience had not already convinced them that these heartless acts of domestic spoliation only nerved their opponents to a pitch of vengeful enthusiasm sufficient to ensure their defeat in the next battle.

To continue:—After the morning's conflagration, the incendiaries marched inland from the heights of Algorta and Lexona down the valley of Luchoa and Erandio, till they arrived at the latter village; occupying the road leading thence to Asua and the Ria which flows up into the valley, and keeping out of musket-shot of its defenders; however, the 6th battalion of Biscay, under Aguirre, annoyed

them considerably in the woods of Sondica. Their lancers remained about a mile in the rear of their columns. The vale of Asua is smooth and broad, and admirably adapted for the evolutions of cavalry. All the Christino movements were plainly seen from fort Banderas, where the Infante Don Sebastian and his suit were stationed that morning, (as St. Nicholas del Desierto seemed to guess, by the frequent grenades he sent thither). The two Generals Villarreal and Eguia with their respective staffs, took up their head-quarters together on an equally commanding eminence, a spur which stretches northward into the vale of Asua towards Sondica, from the long ridge of San Domingo and Monte Archanda, which separates it from the valley of Bilbao. It is distinguished by the remains of an ancient Ermitana dedicated to San Roque, burnt down in these unhappy wars. This hill affords a very extensive view of the scene of operations along the Ria Asua, and by a few minutes ride along its summit ridge, of the Ria Nervion and Bilbao also. The Carlist army bivouacked around, without any shelter from the December mists and showers into whose proper region they had penetrated on these heights, and which enveloped them twenty times in the course of the day; but the position was valuable, being strongly defended by nature against an ascending foe, and rendered still more formidable

by several guns, drawn up from the breaching batteries and planted on the brow above the forest. The columns remained on the roads around Erandio until dusk, and then dispersed for the night in the adjoining villages and farm houses.

Next day (the 2d of December) General Oraa appeared inclined to make a beginning, and after various movements for the distribution of his forces between Erandio and Sondica, threw forward sixty tirailleurs supported by a battalion, a squadron of cavalry and a string of baggage mules. The former took possession of a little hill to the east of Asua, and beat about for somebody "to fight withal," but none were to be seen, although the oak forests looked very suspicious. Presently, an eight-pounder on the spur of the hill of St. Roque, spoke out;—whereupon their cavalry was observed to wheel about and take up a safer position half-a-mile further off;—the battalion sought shelter under a hill, the baggages behind a ditch. The eight-pounder was now turned against the infantry and a small howitzer "lent its benevolent assistance," 'til the tirailleurs, battalion and *bagages* scampered back to Sondica. Another party, in similar apple-pie order, next crossed a few fields to look at the entrenchments and loop-holes of the village of Asua; but after receiving a few shots, they also hastened back to

Sondica, although the northern side of the Ria and all its houses (half the village) had been, from the first, intentionally abandoned to them. A third *reconnaissance* marched out into the open plain:—the *tirailleurs* deployed in the neatest order and commenced firing away “with zeal, promptitude, and assiduity” at the silent mountains half-a-mile off! I asked a dozen officers of experience, what the deuce those fellows were at? Nobody knew—and could only guess that it was something to keep them employed! These, after firing till they were tired, withdrew; when a fourth division again marched boldly behind the outer walls of Asua, on the undefended side, and again retired, amidst the laughter of the Carlist *guerillas*. A fifth, which seemed directed to force a passage over the Ria where it bends towards the mountains, and to take the village defenders in flank, promised something; but the *Christinos* contented themselves with getting a sight of their enemies, and firing at them *a la distancia*. The Carlists obligingly left their entrenchments and advanced to the banks of the Ria to meet them; but the *Christino tirailleurs* prudently kept a field betwixt them and the mountaineers. Thus the day was innocently passed. Towards evening, Oraa threatened the *Camino Real*, from Munguia, as if he wished to enter Bilbao by that easy route, but Eguia instantly moved thither

with his artillery, blockaded the bridge of Derio, and finally slept by the road side, awaiting him; however not the slightest attempt was made to force the position.

On Saturday, the 3rd, the same amusing *reconocimientos* were repeated by General Oraa in the neighbourhood of the *Camino Real*, and with similar results. The whole thing was ludicrous in the extreme. I had no conception that the Christinos were such cowards. The greater number appeared to be well employed in washing and drying their shirts. On Sunday, they behaved a little better, occupying the Palacio and garden of the Marquis of Zamorosta, eastward of Asua, and thence keeping up a flank fire on the Carlists who defended the side of the Ria next the mountains. The *faccioso* Artillery overhead on the heights of Areagas, however, replied very effectively; while the Biscayan guerillas sheltered by a wood which advanced into the valley, peppered them so continuously, that at last they dared not show their faces beyond the garden walls. We could plainly see from the mountains their wounded supported back to Sondica; and when the approach of night put an end to the contest, each held their respective positions. There was also an attempt on the part of the Christinos to drive the Carlists from two houses on the southern bank of the Ria, where it



village of Erandio, and their left on that of Sondica. Oraa commanded in the absence of Espartero; Escalera led the first division; the Baron de Meer the second; Carandolet the cavalry with his usual bad success. The Carlists had only a troop of Lancers under Capt. Don Manuel Crespi. The attack was commenced by two battalions, the sixth and eighth of Biscay, under the command of Aguirre, who had the previous night taken possession of the mountains towards Munguia, and at daybreak poured down on the Christinos at Sondica. These, finding themselves taken in flank, retired along the centre of the valley to Luchoa, when the entire right wing of the Carlists headed by Simon de la Torre, Count Mortara, &c. quickly forded the Ria below Asua and followed them up without giving them breathing-time. Villarreal who commanded the centre, now invested and carried the Palacio of the Marquis de Zamorosta, then threw some planks across the broken bridge of Azua, and attacking the centre of the Christinos, drove them fairly out of the village of Erandio and up to the heights, where their right was stationed in reserve. The Carlists' left under Goñi next passed the Ria and advanced to support the centre and ascend the hills; when the combat became general. The Carlist artillery thundering from the heights of Asua, Are-

agas, Cabras and Archanda, frequently did good service by checking the advance of the Christino masses which seemed every now and then coming down to exterminate the Carlist guerillas; but when the former found the ground tearing open before, beside and around them, they wisely halted and sought the protection of the houses, banks and ditches. I did not hear the Christino artillery all that day, but I have been assured by credible witnesses that two of their field-pieces were fired at a very safe distance—from the heights of Guecho and Algorta at the seaward end of the valley (Oraa very prudently objecting to trust them nearer to those dare-devil guerillas, who would have cheerfully ventured their lives for the pleasure of spiking them). The Christinos could scarcely believe their eyes when they saw Captain Crespi with fifteen *Lanceros* dashing after Lord Ranelagh, amongst their scores of guerillas. The latter took shelter in the *casarios*, and there safely housed, blazed away at the *Lanceros*, killing one horse and wounding two besides that of Lord Ranelagh; all the riders returned in safety; Captain Crespi with a bullet-hole in his *Boyna*—to be mended by *El Rey*, quite to his taste, with the ribbon of San Fernando.

The Christino cavalry, who were absolutely safe from the mountain artillery in the continuation of the valley towards Algorta, made one serious

charge about two o'clock against the Carlist guerillas of the left and centre, who were fast advancing up the heights of Erandio, clearing field after field, and taking ditch after ditch. The guerillas hastened back, some to the nearest houses, others to their battalion to find the necessary protection; but the Christinos rushed in before they could possibly gain the rear, and the result might have been serious, if the personal bravery of Villarreal and his staff (who were in front of a battalion) had not been exerted to inspire a confidence and reanimate their ardour. Seeing their General ready to share their danger, and cheering them on sword in hand to receive their enemies as if confident of victory, every man stood his ground, loaded, and fired away merrily amidst enthusiastic "*vivas!*"—although the mountaineers have an instinctive dread of meeting lancers on the plain, where the splendidly-mounted and well-armed Christinos looked as if they would prance over and trample them to dust on the instant. Villarreal, however, did not trouble his guerillas or his battalion with any untimely efforts to form into hollow square; or attempt to assume any of the scientific attitudes of the *tactica Francesa* (which the unskilled mountaineers would have assuredly bungled, and so have ruined all; )—but wisely threw out about a score of his little battalion to reinforce the guerillas, who

thenceforth responded so steadily to the threats of the cavalry, that the latter were glad to canter off; dragging with them two or three wounded Carlists whom they had overtaken, and leaving two or three of their own steeds and riders prostrate as an equivalent besides 40 infantry who were surrounded and compelled to surrender in a farm house, in which several others had been slain. (Vide Appendix C.)

Every one was sadly disappointed that Villarreal did not follow up his advantage with spirit, and pursue the retreating and dispirited Christino troops to the heights; from whence, in the unfinished state of their bridge, they had no means of escape, and could have had no other aid than the distant guns of Desierto;—if indeed the Christino artilleros could have discriminated between their friends and foes on the opposite bank of the river, in the shades of evening. The following *naïve* description of a fragment of this affair, is extracted from the letters of the correspondent of *The Morning Chronicle* at Portugalete<sup>1</sup>. Opposite views of things are very instructive, as the reader will doubt-

<sup>1</sup> “The day before yesterday I was present at an affair which at one time promised to be the forerunner of a general action. On the fine plain between the heights of Arriaga and Erandio a solid mass of Carlist infantry, about two battalions, appeared, having sallied forth from a small hamlet. This body was flanked by another battalion, drawn up in line at some distance on the right; and in the rear was a general, supposed to be Villarreal, and his

less confess, after perusing this admirable sketch of Christino tactics on the battle field. The writer

staff, with an escort of about a dozen lancers. Opposite was an equal portion of the Queen's troops, who were drawn up, ready to resist the enemy's attack. Guerillas were thrown out on both sides, and some desultory firing took place. The solid column of the Carlists moved steadily over the plain towards the Queen's battalions. This movement was so different from the usual practice of the Carlists, that one was almost at a loss how to account for it. At this moment a squadron of about 150 Lancers of the Queen were seen coming down a lane opening upon the plain; and it appeared certain that their intention was to cut the enemy off, and capture or destroy them. The cavalry advanced at rather a more moderate pace than I thought desirable; but it was suggested that probably they did so in order to keep their horses in wind. When they deployed upon the plain the Carlist column was still advancing; and both parties continued to do so until within pistol shot of each other, the guerillas being engaged on the flanks. As they drew nearer, however, I observed that now and then a few men from the ends of the Carlist companies fringed off, as it were, to the right and left, making the best of their way towards the hamlet in their rear. *Now* was the favourable moment for the Queen's cavalry to charge; the plain was before them, and the enemy attainable; instead of doing this they made a sort of curvetting move, the horses' legs going exceedingly fast, *without getting on*. This was enough, nevertheless, for the Carlists; the fringing off increased, the lancers pranced, and threw their horses on their haunches, and all on a sudden the Carlist column broke up<sup>1</sup>, and a regular rush took place towards the hamlet. So anxious were the rebels to reach it, that most of them bent almost

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<sup>1</sup> I did not see this breaking up of the Carlist column. The battalion headed by Villarreal and his staff stood its ground, as well as its detached guerillas.—E. B. S.

evidently does not comprehend the merits of the Carlist manœuvre of "fringing off" or throwing

double in running, yet the Queen's Lancers, thinking also, no doubt, that discretion is the better part of valour, remained stationary, drawing up on the edge of the plain in the best possible parade order. No sooner had the Carlists reached the houses than they valiantly began to fire away from behind them. It was a decided case of pusillanimity and bravado on both sides. I was close to General Oraa, who commanded in consequence of General Espartero's illness, during the whole affair. He was justly incensed at the conduct of the cavalry, by which so fine an opportunity had been lost of cutting off the whole Carlist column. He dispatched an aide-de-camp to reprimand the officer commanding, who sent back a message saying that all he begged was, that the General would release him from the command of a set of cowards who, at the critical moment, and when he was cheering them on to attack the enemy, refused to advance! This officer dismounted and joined the infantry column, which in the little it had to do behaved perfectly well. *The Carlist flanking column remained in position for about an hour afterward, when it retired, as did the General and his staff.* So ended these supposed preliminaries of a general action! In the early part of the day some sharp skirmishing took place with the infantry; and altogether about a hundred men were wounded and a few killed. Count Campo Alanja, a very fine young man, a grandee of Spain, and aide-de-camp to General Espartero, was severely wounded when gallantly leading a party on. He is in rather a dangerous state.

"Since the arrival of the army here up to this day the loss has been 110 killed and 450 wounded—in all 560. A number which, in my humble opinion, would not have been exceeded if, by judicious and energetic measures, Bilbao had been triumphantly entered, as it might have been, a week or more ago, by the Queen's forcea."—*Correspondent of The Morning Chronicle, Dec. 7.*

out guerillas from a battalion to counteract a charge of cavalry ; nor did I, until I witnessed its efficacy and was let into the secret :—that the Carlist peasantry fight best singly,—each depending on himself ;—and the Conscript Christinos, worst in mass,—all infecting each other with their cowardice !

## CHAPTER III.

WHILE the Carlists were beating Oraa on his own ground in the valley of Asua, on the 5th December, 2,000 men of the garrison of Bilbao assembled in Porta del Circo, from whence they made a sortie towards Begoña, where they burned six houses; but were speedily driven back by Sopelana and the Alavese with great loss. (Vide Appendix C.)

A British artillery officer, Lieut.-Col. B., and his son, arrived together at this period to enter the service of Don Carlos. Two other English amateurs, Lieutenant Bell and Mr. Salasbury Humphreys, also arrived on the 6th December to observe the progress of the siege.

In the night of the 5th, General Oraa began to form his new bridge across the Ria Nervion from the heights of Ondis, (the stronghold to which he had retreated) to the Convent of Desierto, opposite. He had not, however, boats enough to complete it,



and it remained unfinished until the 8th of December. All this time his forces and baggage remained on the east of the Ria, but the only movement of hostility made on either side was by the Carlists who placed a thirty-six pounder on the height of Areagas in hopes to annoy their bivouac, or shatter the bridge; the range however was too great for their half proof powder.

Meanwhile Eguia's engineers had been labouring at a mine commenced in the foundations of the Convent San Agustin and sunk under the Palacio Quintana in the Calle Sendeca, which formed the nearest out-work of the town. The garrison discovered the work, and successfully countermined it; so Eguia had to begin again elsewhere<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The correspondent of *The Morning Chronicle* at Portugalete, entered Bilbao with Espartero, and gives the following account of the discovery.—“A very remarkable incident occurred at this convent, which, as mentioned before, is within ten yards of the large house where the out-pickets of the Queen's were. One night the sentinel, a young Galician recruit, heard an unusual noise, like persons working or knocking at intervals at some heavy object with a large hammer. He mentioned it to his officer—more attention was paid to the sounds, which became now perceptible. The circumstance having been reported to the proper authorities, the chief engineer and other officers attended, and it appeared clear that the enemy were making a mine from the Augustin convent to the house. Immediately a countermine was commenced, and as it advanced, the surmises which had been formed were realised: the miner was distinctly heard at his work,

Oraa having at length completed the floating bridge, his cavalry and baggage descended from the heights of Ondis and Monte Aspe, and passed across it on the 8th,—his infantry following in the night to the fortified convent of San Nicolas.—Having filled it, the remainder marched thence to Portugalete, where beaten and dispirited they again found refuge, and a resting place. Their cowardice, demoralization and insubordination were truly disgraceful.

Deserters arrived daily and in numbers at the Carlist camp. They were estimated at an average of sixteen per diem while General Oraa encamped in the valley of Asua. They said that a large part

and the countermine was proceeded with, with due caution. At length, after several days, the end of the Carlist miner's crow-bar was thrust through the thin partition of earth which remained between him and the Christino delver—the latter caught hold of the bar and endeavoured to pull it through; the Carlist supposing, no doubt, that the stop to his bar arose from its having got hitched between two stones, or something of that sort, worked it from side to side, in order to extricate it. The Christino held on, and worked with him, 'till the aperture having become sufficiently large, he gave one strong pull at the crow-bar, wrested it from the hands of the Carlist, threw it behind him, and thrusting a blunderbuss which he had for his protection into the hole, fired at the scared miner, who was killed, and the enemy's plan frustrated. Had the Carlists succeeded in blowing up the Palacio (as the house is called,) they would, probably, in the confusion, have got into the city."

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of the Christino army was not at all unwilling to change sides if a fair opportunity presented itself; a consummation which was nearly brought about in the action near the bridge of Castrejana, on Espotero's attempt to force a passage on the 26th Nov. when he was fired at by one of his own men, who narrowly missed him. The fellow was immediately secured, and shot of course. Some of his garrison in Desierto, who had been prowling about and plundering the houses of the peasantry around it, met with severe retribution at the hands of the Carlist guerillas of the watchful Castor, who caught them in the fact. At the east of the river also, during the previous week, the Christino soldiers were busy in similar operations, but the Basque peasantry are dangerous subjects for pillage. Three scoundrels who had entered a *casario* to pursue "their vocation" amongst the farmer's chattels, carelessly laid down their muskets beside the kitchen fire, and proceeded to rifle the apartment in the presence of the family. This was more than Basque flesh and blood could bear. Three *muchachos* snatched up the muskets, shot their owners, and then fled for their lives to the Carlist camp, ready made and well equipped soldiers for Villarreal. I was told by a native of Erandio whom I met in Munguia after the battle of Asua (he being burnt out with the rest,) that twenty-five houses were

given to the flames in that single village and town-land by the Christinos (as usual) after their retreat on the night of the 5th December.

Whilst General Oraa was bridge-making, and the Carlists were incomprehensibly allowing him to escape without a blow, I rode to Bermeo where I found in dock the Anglo-American brig *Opelousas*.

This was the vessel respecting which the English consul in Bilbao had sent a *cartel* to Eguia, reclaiming it as a neutral bottom, and urging its liberation; and in bearing a reply to which, the Carlist *Parlementario* Don Mariano Sanz had been shot at the gate of San Agustin, notwithstanding the protection of the flag of truce he bore. Captain Collins had not recovered from the astonishment into which this reckless atrocity threw him. He had never heard of such a thing perpetrated by the aborigines of *Opelousas*, or any other part of the new world; and could not have believed that the Christinos were such savages, or the Carlists were such honest and sociable people, if he had not had his own experience of both. Instead of robbing, stealing, or confiscating his cargo, they bought it from him at his own price, and taught him Spanish into the bargain, while he was delayed by the confusion into which his case was thrown by the murder of Eguia's messenger. When I saw him on the 11th December, the naval authorities of

the little fishing town had his sails safely laid up in store; but he was daily expecting an order from Durango, for their release. He gave me a few pounds of raw Havannah coffee, which I was very glad to carry in my knapsack to the siege, and roast at leisure—no such berry being to be found on the heights of San Domingo, or in the café at Olaveaga, after the first week of our descent from Banderas. He had brought a good store of tea; but the ladies enjoyed it so much of an evening on deck, that he had not a leaf left to give me. With respect to their dealings, he assured me they were “the most honest of *intelligent* people he had ever met,” a great compliment from a Baltimore trader, and rather contradictory of all his former experience in every other part of the world. It seems that the safe rule of both American and African trade is,—“You may trust a regular savage to any extent the first voyage, and he will pay you honestly the second; but as soon as he learns a few words of English, and begins to attend a missionary school and all that;—you cannot trust him with a single nail.”

During the disposal of his cargo, Capt. Collins only recollected having had one “difficulty;” notwithstanding his ignorance of Spanish at the commencement. A female country shopkeeper had purchased some hundred-weights of his tobacco, paid him

fully in dollars, and went her way with her purchase. Next day she returned, to tell him that on counting what remained, she found she had paid him so many too much. "Well!" observed Captain C. to me, "You know it would not have done for me to give into claims of this kind, and to pay back money after counting, and settling and forgetting all about it. So I held my own, till she prayed that if she was telling me a lie, no child might ever be born to her—and there was every prospect of an arrival within a month or so. There was no weathering *that* point you know?—so I gave her the dollars!"—He intended taking going to Bourdeaux a cargo of cod-fish when his affair was settled, and assured me he was so well pleased with his adventure, that he would return with another of salt or tobacco to Bermeo.

As soon as Espartero's troops had safely repassed the Nervion to Portugalete, he wisely broke up his bridge of *Cachemarees*, and cut off all possibility of pursuit. The Carlist guerillas too late attempted to annoy him in his retreat; for when they appeared on the heights of Aspe, soon after sunrise, the Christinos were out of their reach, and the guerillas only wasted powder in firing after them. Nevertheless, a few sharp-shooters who daily occupied these heights, very much annoyed the *trincaduras*, and seriously interfered with the communication by boats between Desierto and Portugalete.

On the 9th December, the Christinos were seen collecting their craft for the purpose of again forming a bridge across the Ria Galinda, nearly in the same place as before; but the despairing garrison, perceiving no movement of troops, on either side for their relief, were busy signalizing by telegraph from Miravalles to Portugalete; and (as we afterwards learned) addressed, on this day, the following pithy leading question to his excellency, Don Baldemero: "Does General Espartero mean to suffer Bilbao to perish?" The answer said to have been returned was, "General Espartero will relieve Bilbao to-morrow or perish himself." The morning came, but nothing was stirring except the bridge—which had broken up just before sunrise with the ebb; having been constructed on the height of a tide swollen by freshes from the mountains! That day and the next were passed in unsuccessful attempts at its reconstruction; and it was not till nine o'clock in the morning of the 12th, that it was completed. By one o'clock all their troops passed as before, foot, horse and two field-pieces, advancing by Baracaldo, the heights of Routegui, Burseña and the mountain of St. Agatha, along the roads and fields by which they made their unsuccessful attempt on the 26th November. As on that occasion, the Carlist guerillas retreated before them to the narrow paths on the steep side of the

mountain, as far as the church of St. Agatha, where they made a stand ; and, commencing the attack in their turn, drove back the Christino guerillas, cavalry, column and all (as before) to the low grounds of Baracaldo and almost to their bridge of boats, where night, as usual, came for their protection. I must do the Christinos the justice to say that some of their officers displayed great gallantry. Two of them who led the attack rode a-head of their guerillas, everywhere and always in advance, and dashed amongst the Carlists on splendid horses (a black and a bright brown) which carried them over everything. They were hit at last,—in the attempt to infuse some spirit into their cowardly followers ; virtually sacrificed (the brown horse fell also, the black galloped back,) but it was only surprising how they escaped so long. Oraa kept a strong body in reserve at Baracaldo all day, and made no movement indicative of the threatened grand and decisive attempt to force the bridge of Castrejana. The Carlist guerillas did not allow his troops to pass the church of St. Agatha on this occasion, or to descend the height towards the bridge—keeping them at bay a long musket shot above it. Villarreal was as usual fighting in person at the head of his staff on the mountains, where he bivouacked in the



evening. He had eight pieces of artillery bearing on the bridge, but his guerillas had all the honour of the repulse to themselves.

At this period Bilbao was in a wretched state, the garrison having no meat, and reduced to a quarter of a pound of bread, the same of biscuit, an ounce of rice and two ounces of salt cod per diem. The only full ration the soldiers continued to receive was of wine, and it was said that symptoms of a contagious disease were beginning to appear, consequent on the insufficient diet to which all classes were exposed. There never was any absolute famine felt, for the peasantry would run considerable risks to introduce provisions into the town, for which the besieged paid liberally enough;—but singular as it may appear, they could never obtain any intelligence of what the Carlists were doing; as I was afterwards assured by a gentleman of Bayonne who happened to be shut in while on a commercial visit, and spent the greater part of his time under a *port cocher* to save his head from the bomb shells. Eguia was all this time continually constructing and reconstructing his batteries with every care, varying their positions and trying the effect of new combinations to counteract the heavy plunging fire which the town forts poured down upon them,—from which they suffered more and

more, the nearer they approached the walls in the quarter chosen for attack, which was unfortunately the strongest angle of the ramparts.

The hill, on which the lines and cross lines of forts that protect the town on the side of San Domingo are built, converges and slopes down from Begoña to the gate of San Agustin, like a sugar-loaf (turned on its side) from base to point :—the prostrate apex terminating at the captured Convent. The whole force of the hill forts, step above step on these heights, commanded the suburb of San Agustin ; so that even when the Convent was in possession of the Carlists, they had still every thing above to contend with, and their labours were little more than begun. The garrison had taken all possible defensive precautions ;—fortifying wall after wall within the threatened positions adjoining, to fall back upon, if necessary ;—building up streets to check the progress of the assailants if they should contrive to burst through all the outer impediments ; pulling down houses through and through the blocks of buildings near the gates of la Cujes and San Agustin, to check their advances to the interior, (in the good old Roman style of stopping the progress of a conflagration,) and lining all the quays with casks of sand, to form a continuous parapet, and shelter the passing troops from

the aim of the guerillas in the opposite suburb of Albia.

Whilst the Christino guerillas on the morning of the 12th were endeavouring to clear the way for their masses on the hills above the bridge of Castrejana, Eguia was again trying the powers of his breaching battery on the Palacio Quintana in the Calle Sendeca, the remaining outer defence in the suburb of San Agustin. It consisted of four guns (a thirty-six, a twenty-four, and two sixteen pounders) aided by five others (a long twenty-four, a twenty-four carronade, two of eight, and a small mortar) at the other side of the river in Albia. Nothing, however, could stand the superiority of position, of pieces, and of powder, which the garrison enjoyed. The Carlist breast-works and embrasures lasted only a few hours under the heavy hammering directed against them by the broadside arrangement of fifteen pieces overhead; the guns were dismantled and silenced;—being either dismounted or prudently withdrawn and reserved for a more favourable chance, or for more efficient service against Espartero on the hills.

The heavy rain of the 13th December was an effectual bar to any active operations either on the mountains, or in the suburbs of Bilbao. The next

morning, however, the weather cleared up, and the Christinos recommenced their guerilla warfare; engaging those of Castor's single battalion in their usual very prudent style along the heights above Burseña and Baracaldo, and on the mountains of St. Agatha and St. Lucia on the left side of the Ria Nervion. Their efforts were so cautious and feeble that Villarreal, who went across the bridge of Castrejana to make a reconnoissance on the hills that morning, attended only by a single company of guerillas, appeared to afford them embarrassing occupation above; while two of his eight-pounders stationed at the Cordeleria of Saroza, kept their two field-pieces in check on the low grounds. The Carlists also lined the parapet at their side of the Ria Salcedon, and effectually prevented the Christino infantry approaching its shores. These low grounds were occupied by Goñi with three battalions; the bridge of Castrejana was held by Pablo Sanz with three others; while Castor repelled all their attacks on the mountains with one. Another Carlist battery was planted on the heights above Saroza, consisting of a large twenty-four pounder, a four pound field-piece, and a small mortar,—commanding both the ford of Quadra beneath, and the road over the opposite heights of St. Agatha leading to the bridge. The Christino masses lay in Baracaldo,

where they had little shelter at night, save what the naked walls of the houses they burned on the 27th Nov. afforded them. Towards evening they made a movement with a battalion and a field-piece along this road, (out of sight of the Carlists, for the hill lay between,) obviously with the intention of driving Villarreal and his company from the church of St. Agatha. A strong party of their's, already in the field, at the same time ascended the mountain at the opposite side, and having attained the summit, commenced firing at the church, the General and his reconnoitring party—half-a-mile below. They feared, however, to descend, and wisely kept on the ridge awaiting the battalion and the field piece. These at last arrived on the brow of the hill where the road to the church of St. Agatha rounded into view, and unperceived, took up a position opposite the Carlist 24-pounder and instantly fired on it. I happened to be seated beside the gun at the moment, amidst a group of staff officers who were wishing for something to do, (there being very little fighting going on, and Villarreal was selfishly keeping it all to himself, a mile in advance, at the Christino side of the Ria Salcedon); and was amused to observe how gratified they were to hear the ball whistling over their heads. Comandante Trovo's shout of "*Artilleros!*" brought every man to his gun, and the

next instant his twenty-four shot was doing duty in the midst of the Christino battalion, which thereupon wisely checked its march towards St. Agatha's church, wheeled back and took shelter at the opposite side of the brow. His second shot evidently made the forsaken group of gunners feel uncomfortable ;—at the third, the Christino field-pieces took to flight after the battalion, while the Carlists made the valley between ring with shouts and laughter. Five shots in all were fired at us across the river, not one of which could we find, though all the idlers watched the balls attentively; marking and hunting them down like gamekeepers. The threatened movement defeated, the Christino guerillas also retired for the night, and the Carlists again took possession of all the upper part of the Ria Salcedon ;—boldly scattering into the mountains beyond; while Espartero, having once more ascertained that he could effect nothing by way of Castrejana, withdrew his dispirited troops to Baracaldo and Desierto, where the cannons of the convent afforded them a welcome protection.

The Carlist batteries were now allowed to lie silent four or five days. In fact, the further success of the siege appeared to depend on the operations in the mountains; and as Espartero and Oraa insisted on making it an affair of artillery

there, the principal Carlist artilleros took the field to gratify him. However, on the night of the 14th a decided change for the worse took place in the weather. Chilling gusts from the Bay of Biscay swept over the mountains, drenching them with heavy rain every half-hour. All the day following, a similar succession of tempest showers came driving in—strange compounds of mist, rain, hail and whirlwind, as strangely followed by gleams of sunshine and delusive calms. It was the coldest day I had felt since the famous 29th of October last, which raised the former siege by driving everybody from the heights of San Domingo. It was now the Christinos' turn to feel the severity of the weather. The Carlist mountaineers were seasoned to every variety of weather, torrid or frigid,—but the foresight of Eguia prevented the necessity of exposing them to its inclemency. All who were not on actual duty in the mountains, slept comfortably in the captured districts of Duesto. The lower part of it (Olaveaga) accommodated in succession the battalions who guarded the water lines towards Portugalete, while the upper (Goyerri) was occupied by those blockading the town and guarding the batteries. The Christino masses, on the contrary, were lying out for three nights (after the march to St. Agatha)

in a mountainous country, desolated by themselves eighteen days before, and must have felt the effects of the northern blasts very severely.

On the 13th and 14th they were engaged in constructing two batteries on the heights of Baracaldo, above Burseña, evidently intending to borrow some of the heavy arms of the convent of Desierto to batter the Carlists out of the opposite Cordeleria of Saroza (which the Duke of Wellington had fitted up as an hospital during his Basque campaign;) and then at their ease to throw across the mouth of the Ria Salcedon the pontoon bridge which General Evans had obligingly sent Espartero from the Ria Uremea; but they were so annoyed by the guns of the Cordeleria and of Monte de Cabras, and so disheartened by the bad weather, that on the afternoon of the 15th they gave up the attempt, having only succeeded in completing the embrasures; when the whole army retired to seek shelter (for the second time) in Desierto, Zamorroto, and Portugalete. I must do the Christinos the justice to say, they seemed to understand the art of retreating very well indeed. I had now seen them beaten thrice within three weeks, and their masses thrice marching off in double-quick time in admirable order; as if they had studied and rehearsed the manoeuvre till they were perfect in their parts. On these occasions, it was highly amusing



sight to behold the Carlist guerillas driving before them the imposing masses of their enemies.

Twenty of the Royal Guard passed over to the Carlist ranks on the 16th of December, and five others who were taken in a house in Burseña during the pursuit, said that they also intended to desert; but had been prevented at the moment by seeing other comrades who attempted it shot by their fellows as they ran to the Carlists. The road along which the Column was pursued was extensively stained with blood. A Carlist shell fell into one of the batteries which the Christinos had been preparing in Baracaldo on the previous day, killing one artillero and wounding nine. Again the Christinos put into execution their infernal incendiary policy, and set fire to the houses that had previously escaped them: a most intelligible signal of the rancour and recklessness of despair.

Espartero and the Christino columns slept in Portugalete the night of the 15th, and the whole country was again clear of them, with the exception of Desierto and that portion under its guns. A couple of *trincaduras* ventured to show themselves a little further up the Ria than usual on the morning of the 16th, between the convent of Desierto and the bridge of Luchana; but after a few shots from the mountain batteries, they were glad to scud back again. Their bridge of boats also

under Desierto (the fourth) was broken up the previous night—and not a vestige of it was visible in the morning.

Eguia had at this period two bridges of boats laid across the Ria Nervion, from Olaveaga to Albia, each well secured by chain cables. These and the series of piles higher up within full view of the garrison, cut off from the town all possibility of relief by any attempts of the war steamers to force a sudden passage. They might have accomplished it and they ought to have attempted it in the *first* instance, and have dashed up the Ria with their four steamers before the Carlists were prepared; instead of “waiting a while” and then endeavouring to storm inaccessible mountain positions where they had been well beaten two years ago by Zumalacarregui while on a similar errand. But Espartero was exquisitely whimsical and indecisive; and on every occasion continued to afford most gratifying proofs that he was impenetrable to experience. Don Carlos could not have had a better friend at the head of his enemies. The estimate which the most “respectable” portion of his troops formed of his capabilities and chances of success as a General, may be guessed from the fact, that on the 15th of Decr. 200 of the Royal Guards passed over in a body to the Carlists near Villaba. The rest were only saved by a forced march to Pampeluna.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE Christinos having once more retreated from the mountains on which they had threatened Castrejuna Bridge—and Eguia being occupied in restoring his guns from the batteries in the hills to those in the suburbs of San Agustin and Goyerri ;—we had a couple of days' leisure, which I employed in riding to and from Durango, five leagues distant ; my wardrobe being in an undeniable state of siege, and almost unfit to be seen even on the mountains. I was informed that there were such persons in the camp as tailors and shoemakers ; but on the strictest inquiry I could not find any cloth or leather ; so

<sup>1</sup> That amusing gossip, the *Phare de Bayonne*, assured its readers that Eguia had lost his nose in one of these mountain skirmishes :—an ungenerous rumour of rivalry, destitute of the shadow of truth, for the General's nose still stands proudly pre-eminent, "unhurt amidst the war of elements," "like a goodly tower by the sea side," as Solomon sings,—of which *Le Phare* may well be envious.

of necessity, I rode to refit in Durango. The mountains were covered with mists through which the muleteers would not attempt to find the paths, so I, (not presuming to know them better though I passed that way thrice,) descended with others to the old paved road by the side of the river Nervion amongst the once beautiful valleys of Begoña, now bearing sad traces of the effects of civil war. This district has suffered severely in the late sortie from the town, when several houses were burned. Their blackened and crumbling remains struck the eye as melancholy memorials of the Christino line of march that day. The valley road although level enough, was one of the worst I ever travelled; and torrents of rain fell to make it worse. It was a series of dislocated stones, round and smooth as selected from the river, once paved in continuous ribs along the route, but now presenting only a series of fractures with pools between. I registered "a vow" in my road book never to go that way again unless I could not possibly help it;—so on completing my business in Durango, I returned on the 18th along the fine *Camino Real* which passes within musket shot of the town, as being far preferable. A military friend who was anxious to be in time for the expected cannonade, accompanied me; and with the aid of the good road, we arrived at the Puente Nuevo under the guns of the

lower Morro, just as Eguia opened fire upon the Palacio Quintana at the other side of the town. The deep and narrow gap through which we entered on the bridge, afforded one would think, a most tempting opportunity to the gunners opposite; however they did not fancy us just then; so we rode quietly over the long bridge without a single salute, though our Carlist *boynas* and tassels marked us as fair game, and they had providently demolished the battlement nearest to themselves to get a clear aim at passengers. A little further up the river, nearer to the Morro, the advanced guard of the besiegers were amusing themselves pitching the bar. A parapet of stones ran across it for their shelter, but so low, that the man who watched the gunners above was obliged to go on his knees to make himself small enough. Passing along with impunity as we did, I could not forbear criticising the apparent *vis inertie* of the Christino artilleros. "Pooh!" said my friend, "two horsemen are not worth wasting powder and shot upon!" This was rather mortifying. "One of us may be a General for what they know?" I suggested, "but they wont even try!" "Not one shot in a hundred hits!" said he, "and the ninety-nine are wasted. I suppose they have not killed even a donkey since they opened fire on the bridge!" "That calculation may do for the Spaniards;" said I, "but being an Irishman, I

assure you that if I were a gunner up there, I could not resist the temptation of having a shot at ourselves down here !”

Thus we argued the point till we crossed the bridge, when the artilleros having us nicely in a line with the Carlist guard, threw a new light on the subject, by a shot which came bounding down the road, intended “for all and several,” as they say in the Highlands, but which fortunately, was turned aside in its course by a trip against the little parapet. The Carlists never stopped their game, and we passed on, acknowledging that the gunners of Morro-bajo were more attentive and ingeniously economical than we had imagined. The musketry of the church of Begoña was a much more serious gauntlet to run ; but, fortunately, the smoke of the Carlist cannonade came sweeping up the hill side in this direction, and interposed its good offices until we had passed by. A little further on, an elevated terrace of the road exposed us to the fire of Fort Larrinaga, and one of its shells was accordingly sent on a reconnoissance ; but the beneficent powder smoke refracted us and our position to the gunner’s eye with a variation of about twenty yards from the true altitude, so that his projectile went about its business very harmlessly. Continuing our course up the mountains, we were rather startled at falling in with an

advanced guard of Christinos, on what we knew three days before to have been Carlist territory. We had heard of no sortie from the town since then; but, as Charles Matthews used to say, "It might have happened, you know" that morning. They did not fire on us! They did not even challenge us! Possibly they took us for officers from the garrison, reconnoitering? There they sat smoking at their ease as we rode up to them! Farther on, one of Castor's Biscayan guerillas was walking leisurely over the mountain, denying himself the pleasure of a shot at them; as if he never took any amusement of that kind now-a-days! "O, that's impossible!" said my friend, "These must be some of the recent deserters from Espartero?" So it was. They were just commencing a new line of duty, and fortunately for us made no mistakes arising from the force of habit, for which we felt properly grateful,—there being neither parapet nor powder cloud between us. However, the eye does not become reconciled in a moment to such anomalous apparitions. I had been watching these fellows for three weeks doing their best to pepper my good friends the Carlists, on hill or plain; and it only seemed to coincide with the fitness of things and of uniforms, that they should take a snug aim at us now. But they were old soldiers: they did not even throw away a word on us; and we

arrived in excellent time for the operations directed against the Palacio in the Calle Sendeca.

The results, however, were nearly the same as before. The superior number and calibre of the guns which the town was able to bring to bear on the 4 batteries (viz. two in Albia, one in Campo Volantin, and one in Uribarri) prevented the latter from effecting a practicable breach before the short day was so far gone as to render their further efforts useless; so they ceased about four in the afternoon. The very echoes of the town discharges were convincing that the powder of its defenders was of a superior quality to that of its assailants, and that they used it much more liberally. Eguia did not renew the attack next day, as Espartero was early stirring at Desierto,—bringing up his reinforcements in a long column from Portugalete, reinforced and amounting, it was said, to 16,000 men and 250 cavalry;—preparing for a fourth attempt to relieve the town, by re-crossing the river Nervion to the right bank once more, aided by a new bridge (the fifth) of boats.

About noon a steamer (believed to be French), came up the Ria with stores and artillery (eighteen pieces as we were assured), and landed them opposite the convent—under the quarries of Monte Aspe, on the quay road from the broken bridge of Luchana to the sands of Algorta. The troops



in fort Desierto speedily crossed over in launches, and before dusk, 7,000 at least had passed and taken possession of the heights. A slight skirmish took place between the advanced Carlist post (the 6th battalion of Biscay,) at the village of Erandio, and the descending column penetrating to take up its old position there; which ended by the Christinos retreating to the heights for the night.

The state of Bilbao at this time was desperate. Two deserters (one an Urbano) informed us that their powder was nearly exhausted, and that the garrison were reduced to rations of 1 ounce of oil, 2 ounces of rice, 2 ounces of bacon, and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ounces of small biscuits for two days; they had still some wine and brandy. Orders had been issued commanding all families to deliver up any morsels of provision they possessed on pain of death. They were of course allowed rations; but it was stated that they obtained still less and worse than the garrison, and not regularly each day as the latter did. The town was, in fact, reduced to the last extremity; and (what appeared to annoy the besiegers considerably,) the Christino authorities had succeeded in impressing the minds of the Urbanos and the garrison with the notion that the Carlists would shew them no quarter if they surrendered! Eguia, who is humanity personified,

did, I believe, all he could to undeceive them; but such difficulties attended the task, (especially since the death of his *Parlementario*,) that nothing effective was accomplished for the removal of the delusion; and the besieged continued to resist, with all the desperation of despair.

The two English brigs of war, (the *Saracen* and *Ringdove*,) lay quietly all this time under the guns of Desierto, at the quay from whence Espartero's troops were crossing. We were informed that during the previous week, the *Saracen* had fired three shots amongst the Carlists on shore: intelligence that surprised every one considering that they were not molested! I myself saw one of these brigs firing two shots during Oraa's last passage of the Ria Nervion; and I know that the British steamer which towed up the launches on the 27th ult. (to convey home the wounded from the attack at the bridge of Castrejana on the 26th), also fired a gun; but not having heard of any damage inflicted thereby, I had conjectured that they were but signals. Certainly those brigs lay in a very awkward position on the 19th, under the direct fire between the guns of the convent and those of the Carlists on the hills of Cabras and Archanda. The latter, however, acting by the express directions of Eguia, cautiously abstained from inflicting any injury on them.

A letter was that morning received from Gomez, at Orduña, 15 miles south of Bilbao, where he had arrived with 4,000 men, 800 horses, and thirty-five prisoners of rank, including Brigadiers Flintner and Puente. Every one was in amazement, and asked if he had dropped from the sky!

We were now all again on the hills. The mules and oxen were tugging the guns from the batteries in San Agustin up the rocky and miry roads to bring them to bear for the fourth time on the approaching Christinos;—so often had Eguia been disturbed in his operations. He and Villarreal now took up their head-quarters at the hill fort of Banderas overlooking all the enemy's operations. The road and river from Portugalete to Desierto, the bridge of boats to the opposite side, and the heights of Aspe, Ondis, and Erandio, were covered with the Christino masses. Between the armies, ran the Ria Asua, across which individuals frequently conversed. To the east of Banderas lay the great valley which Espartero was beaten out of on the 5th of December, and to the west the fertile plain of Deusto, hemmed in between the Ria Nervion and the continuous hills of Archanda and St. Domingo. This rich tract of alluvion is crowded with *casarios* (farm-houses), cottages, gentlemen's seats, convents, and even palacios, worthy of the name, but now deserted, or

occupied as barracks or stores. Goyerri, the upper part nearest Bilbao, and most exposed to its cannonade—is, or rather was, lined with stores for ship goods, &c. Many of these now lie in ruins from the effect of the shells, in the attempts of the garrison to dispossess the besiegers. Olaveaga is the lower and more agricultural part of the plain, under the convent of los Capuchinos and Fuerte Banderas, where the river makes an extensive circuit to the west,—shaping the plain into a semicircle; and the buildings principally those of the farmers and ship storekeepers, extend along it in a street for more than a mile, with an excellent road, or rather quay, between. The houses are better built than in any other country part of the provinces I have seen; and when the vines were in leaf, and climbing up the balconies, as they were when we first arrived in October,—the scene was delightful. Here Eguia held his head-quarters while active operations were going on against the town; but when the Columns crossed to the east, he took up his abode in the mountains above, which run from Banderas south for several miles, extending nearly to Durango, completely separating the long valley of Duesto and the towns of Bilbao, Galdacano and Zornosa on the west, from those of Erandio, Asua, Luchoa, Sondica, Zamudio, &c., on its eastern side.

At any other time I should have been a gratified amateur amongst the treasures of architecture and agriculture displayed before me ; but during the two sieges which I had the pleasure and sorrow of being witness to, my attention was very forcibly turned into other channels. All day (and sometimes all night too) my eyes and ears were filled with the sights and sounds of war, a thousand times more striking and impressive than ever they appear in a plain. I would give very little indeed to see a campaign in Holland, Flanders, Courland, or any of the flat "prize-fighting grounds of Europe;" but a siege of Bilbao is a display of the picturesque, worth coming from China to behold. The valley is a splendid stage—an immense amphitheatre for the display of military effects ; while the circling heights afford the amateur superb positions and points of view that vary at every step, and form altogether one of the most magnificent natural Colosseums in the world. Every day in fine weather the hills were crowded with spectators ; and never did a spectacle of ancient or modern times attract a more numerous, interested or enthusiastic audience. The Infante Don Sebastian and his staff were constant attendants, and during the grand performances, had a private box (Fuerte Banderas,) which afforded them a superior view of the Christino manœuvres ; interrupted occasionally by San

Nicholas del Desierto, who had the ill manners to pelt his Highness with grenades in the Irish "bottle and rattle" style. The Christino generals were incessantly bridge-building, house-burning, marching and counter-marching, and going through the prettiest sham battles imaginable. Twenty spy glasses were here in daily requisition to appreciate their movements, to identify the houses, or count the numbers that fell under the minute-guns of Castor's guerillas, and were soon stripped to their shirts either by friends or enemies. What bursts of applause from the lynx-eyed peasant spectators in the upper gallery, when their sons and brothers, in similar homely garb, chased the dashing and gallantly equipped Lancers of the Queen's Royal Guard before them ! What shouts of laughter when the experienced guerillas, rounding the hills to windward over Castrejana, set fire to the fern and heather, and then safely blazed away at the smoked and blinded Christinos ! I never knew before that human beings had such excellent sight,—but the fact was, that the telescopes of the Senores generally played second fiddle to the eyes of the *paysanos*. An exclamation, a laugh, or a hearty curse of the *soldado*, generally awakened and directed the attention of the telescopic Commandante to the point of attraction. It was highly instructive to get a seat beside any of the spectators

who knew the country or the town, and listen to their observations on the progress of a *concerted* cannonade or a bombardment played in the orchestra below, by the rampart and battery performers. I recollect that on the 17th November, I was sitting with three young ladies on the ridge of San Domingo, alternately watching the distant thrashing which Espartero was receiving from Villarreal at the bridge of Castrejana, and the storming of the Convent of San Agustin by the Arragonese just below us. These three girls were very pretty; but the three years' war had so deranged the equilibrium of beaux and belles in Biscay, that they were promenading without an escort till I offered my services. I found two of them particularly well-informed in the topography of the town and suburbs, forts and batteries; which they accounted for incidentally, by observing that they lived *there* (pointing out a pretty country-house in Uribarri beneath); but five cannon shot having passed through it the other day, they had come on a visit to their friend up *here*, and would probably remain with her till the siege was over! The Biscayans are indeed exceedingly social and hospitable. During the two recent sieges, the inmates of perhaps 1,000 houses, who were dispossessed in the dangerous vicinity of the town, all found shelter and refuge

among their more fortunate neighbours at a little distance; and during this whole period, I only saw a single beggar, the mother of a little child, in immediate want of a morsel of bread. Of the family parties whom I daily meet on the heights (for it was impossible to sit incuriously below, while there were such sights to be witnessed above) I found even the poorest courteous and generous; willing to share their bit of maize bread and bottle of chacoli with me and their neighbours, and enduring all the ills of war with a degree of patient hope and cheerful resignation that showed how deeply their feelings were interested in the success of the siege. The women were everywhere far more active and zealous partizans than the men. They only needed a hint that there were wounded soldiers lying in the hermitages of Santa Agatha, San Rocque or San Domingo after an attack of the Column or a sortie from the town, and they would rise from their beds in the midst of the night, bundle them up and march with them on their heads, lantern in hand, for miles across the mountains; laden besides with all the little comforts they could carry; and afterwards they would sit and tend the poor *heridos* hour after hour, and come day after day while their services could avail. How stoically whole villages camped out on the hills, while the Christinos were marauding in their dwell-



ings! patiently watching the efforts of the Carlist artillery and guerillas to dislodge them; and when at last the cowardly Column had retired for the night, with what shouts and *vivas!* they would dance down again to take possession. There was always something interesting to be seen or heard on the heights on a fine day, that well rewarded the trouble of the ascent;—but in bad weather all one's faculties were absorbed in the single sense of feeling, and it was useless to think of anything except the storm which seemed inclined to blow you over the hill with the falling leaves—the thunder-showers that threatened to wash you into the river below—or the freezing mixture of snow, hail, sleet and mist, that was doing its best to transform you into an icicle. Fine days, however, still intervened, and actually prolonged the Biscayan autumn to the 20th of December; and on these it was a luxury to be out and enjoying life on the mountains. The valley of the Bilbao river or Ria Nervion (the long western vale of operations), is of a whimsically tortuous figure, not unlike the great brass serpent in the royal Spanish band; and like it, was, while the siege lasted, a very fine musical instrument, whose compass and execution continually attracted my admiration. Unlike the serpent, however, it was played at each end (Morro and Portugaleta), as well as at a variety of intermediate points:—

Miravalles, Begoña, Campo Volantin, Burseña, Banderas, Bilbao, Monte de Cabras, San Nicolás, San Agustín, San Mamés, San Vincente, and a number of other saintly stations, where cannons and mortars of all calibres were daily practising their gamut with all imaginary "shakes, graces, and variations," accomplishing the most "difficult effects," and awakening echoes that, like some self-satisfied amateurs, once set a going, could not stop themselves. Every ravine had its peculiar note, heard to the greatest advantage at the upper extremity; where, often, while traversing the summit paths, the airy concussions have rushed up with abrupt velocity, taking me by surprise and striking upon my ear with a startling violence! There was one ravine leading up to the old windmill of San Domingo, the sides of which, feathered with pines and firs, gave birth to some comically aspirated sounds, that when repeated continuously, produced strange sardonic guttural laughing intonations, worthy of incorporation in the demoniac *scenas* of *Der Freischütz*, or *Robert le Diable*. I shall never forget the shrill fiendish scream that issued from San Francisco's warning belfrey, when just as it was enunciating "one, two, three," for a shell—a sacrilegious Carlist ball dashed in—sending the fragments singing and shrieking over the city! (N. B. San Francisco, in revenge, mounted a steeple-gun next

his story! In the morning he presented it to Eguia, who, instead of the usual fee, presented him with a couple of dollars for his exploit, but would not grant him a brevet for the process of extinction.—Occasionally the side of one of the great valleys of Bilbao, Asua or Castrejana, would exhibit a running line of flames, curling and crackling along the summits for miles,—presenting strange unearthly sights and sounds in the darkness and stillness of night,—all proceeding from a spark of some guerrilla watchfire carried off by the night breeze, and fanned into destructiveness amongst the heath, furze and fern which it happened to find in its course. Occasionally rocks, ravines and trees intervened, and the wind rose and lulled again, giving birth to wild variations in the features of these gigantic fireworks, which I have never seen equalled in the supernatural scenery of the German drama. Then the village of Begoña burned in a sortie of the garrison, and those of Baracaldo, Algorta, and Erandio, destroyed by the Christino columns, illuminated the surrounding country night after night; all suitably terminated by the yule-fires of Banderas, which Espartero kindled to light him into Bilbao on Christmas-eve.

Each season had its appropriate amusement. On fine days hunting for cannon-balls was a popular recreation. It was highly interesting to observe

the races of the *soldados* to the spots where they struck, (perceptible only at the instant by the cutting of the grass or heath through which they took to earth), and the speed with which they unkenelled each, that they might be at leisure to mark the flight and descent of the next. The balls were fair game to every one, and ready money (ten-pence) to the sportsman who bagged them. "You give a peseta for a ball," said a Navarrese wag to Eguia one day, "what do you give for a cannon?" "*Vamos á vere!* Let us see your great gun," said the cautious old General. The fellow produced a swivel from beneath his cloak, amidst roars of laughter. He had found it in a ship store in Olaveaga (where the Christinos had forgotten it), and now begged leave to present it to the artillery department, with an humble claim to serve as captain of the gun when it was mounted on something. The cannon-balls on both sides occasionally took strange flights of fancy, and left their marks in most out-of-the way places, for the edification of all whom it might concern. Several went out of town, and buried themselves in the English graveyard in the Albia on the river side, just below the Half-moon Island,—along with the former Captain and Surgeon of the Ringdove, and the officers who fell in the campaigns of the Duke of Wellington. The pretty cupola of the Campo Santo fort, on the

town ramparts, had holes in its noddle distributed with such Promethean regularity, that, viewed from the height of San Domingo, they presented a very inquisitive countenance—eyes, nose, mouth, ears and chin all complete. On the other hand, a Christino ball from the convent of San Mamès dashed in through the church door of San Pedro in Deusto, previously knocking down a tree that stood in its way, and finally lodged in the pulpit! Another took off the head of San Antonio as he stood in the niche of his own chapel in front of the same fortalice, holding the infant Jesus in his arms. The Carlist battery under the niche returned the compliment at the very next shot, by scalping the round-head steeple-turret of San Mamès, and exposing him to the passing scoffs of all the children in the village;—"Go up thou bald head!" The beautiful wrought-iron thirty-two pounder, made at Seville of old horse-shoes, was struck in the under lip, during the same engagement, in a manner to illustrate most strikingly the advantages of its construction, combining as it does strength and toughness with lightness. The trees in the Prado of Campo Volantin were dimpled, pitted, scarred, tattooed, shaved, cut, curled and amputated in every known style of barber-surgery. To tell the truth, I only ventured amongst them at night; that favourite walk of Bilbao beaux and belles being a

very unhealthy parade in the day time ; but at night it was tolerably safe ; the only danger being that of stumbling over the lopped arm of a tree, while one's attention was attracted to the strange grimaces of the shattered trunk, grinning over head.

On the mountains, the waste of forest life and limb, was equally deplorable. In fine weather, and in the early part of the siege, they were merely cut for the purposes of fuel, so the consumption was comparatively trivial ; but when the rain and snow and Espartero came, everybody that had a bill-hook or a sword was up in a tree, cutting, hacking and maiming for life, to get door-posts, bressimers, rafters, roof-trees and thatch for their huts ; all of which I could jump over, down hill, without difficulty—if the bayonets did not stick up through the roof. The smoke passed freely out, and the rain passed as freely in through every part of these extemporaneous *caserns* ; but when the snow fell, they became at once most comfortably storm-proof, being weather-slated by the first shower. This was luxury ; and as there was not a tent in the camp, there were no invidious distinctions or jealousies. The nights were intensely cold before the snow fell, especially just before day-break ; but fortunately at that chilly hour, the military band of Bilbao (a very fine band it was) used to play its *adiao*, or some other appropriate and rousing tune ; when all

the hill folk would jump up and warm themselves by dancing to it. The Spaniards have a natural taste for music. Night or day, wherever they go, even if only three or four are together, one is sure to be found able to give out a marching song, another to sing a second, and the others to join in the chorus. The march of one of these merry battalions over the mountains, is a sight worth going thither from London to see. The rain beats on them—they don't mind it, but sing all the merrier, as if like ducks, they rejoiced in the drops. One fellow carries the soup cauldron of the company, and is obliged to stop occasionally to lighten his load by spilling out the rain. Many have taken off their coats, and slinging them across their breast, leave their backs exposed, and thus face the storm. The sleeves are thereby untenanted, but the Carlist loves his musket as if it was an arm of his body; so he thrusts the butt and lock up into the sleeve, and jogs on, a comical figure, as if he held up his elbow in defiance or derision of the clouds that drenched him. "There goes an officer without a sword! How happens that?" "O, he broke it in the last assault on San Agustin; but he's going into battle, and he'll soon find another!" One happy national trait counterbalanced a hundred wants, grievances, difficulties and misfortunes,—nobody grumbled; everybody was patient, struggled on and hoped

for better times. There was seen a spirit approaching closely to what Englishmen would consider levity in the midst of the most important affairs. The soldier had his joke on everything and everybody, and often sang it extempore "for the amusement of the Company," and "it caused a great laugh at the time," as Mathews used to say. Whilst Espartero was cannonading the Carlists across the Ria Asua (the first time,) sportsmen on the opposite hills were popping at hares and woodcocks, and knocking them down with *Viv' el Rey!* It was amusing to see how quietly the horses and mules who had never been hit, grazed amidst the cannonnade; merely smelling the clouds occasionally, and remarking to one another that these mountains were very thundery! The riders too seemed as unconscious or casehardened as their cattle, and would scarcely interrupt their smoking or joking to get out of the way of a Christino cannonade. I confess I thought myself rather in danger at first, but a little experience soon set my nerves right, and convinced me that I ran as much (or as little) risk in one place as in another, so I never afterwards denied myself the amusement of hunting cannon balls to cover, with the rest. It was otherwise, however, when the Royal English artillerymen began to crack Shrapnell shells on our heads two or three days before Christmas eve. After they burst, there was



nothing to be found on Archanda, Areagas and Monte de Cabras, but wounds; and, although we were not aware at the time, to whose attention we were indebted for such striking displays of skill, everybody seemed tolerably satisfied that the only secure plan was to get out of their range altogether, and all who enjoyed any free will in the matter, did so accordingly. Lord Ranelagh in vain made light of the momentary arrivals; inviting his numerous acquaintances to sit and partake of the Christmas cheer that Espartero was sending, as his compliments of the season, across the Ria Asua. No! there was something too pointed (though incomprehensible) in the new Christino practice; no deserters were coming to explain it; and at last, all who were not on actual duty—even those whom I have seen, day after day, sitting smoking unconcernedly or promenading leisurely on the heights of San Domingo while all the town forts were cannonading them, or whom I have observed calmly facing, from morning to night, a guerilla fusillade on the hills of Castrejana, as a thing of less importance than a hail-storm—even they thought it better to smoke somewhere else, just round the shoulder of the hill, where the *cigarro* would not be jerked out of their lips by their horses' nervous start, as the fiery thunderclap came smack at their heads, and the splinters skelped along their quar-

ters, or rattled among their hoofs. Courage is very much an affair of sociability as well as of custom, in man or beast; and so, though no smoker myself, I speedily joined the good company at the sheltered side, where a hearty laugh welcomed the fresh arrival of every idler. Nobody thought of asking "Are you wounded?" but numbers inquired "Did your horse escape?"—Such is a camp! Death is nothing;—a wound is a matter of course, to be borne with fortitude; but a good steed disabled is a serious annoyance: "*Carajo! Demonio!*" 'Tis d—nably vexatious!"

The immediate vicinity of Bilbao also afforded very striking and instructive scenes. The following rough sketch of a spectacle exhibited in the suburbs of San Agustin,—transcribed from my note book, just as it stands,—may perhaps suffice for the peaceful reader or spectator.

December 19.—Scene 1. "The moon behind a cloud" (important to night-walkers under the walls of Bilbao). Half-a-dozen amateurs on a party of pleasure strolling along the quay from Olaveaga to the Campo Volantin:—Arrive at a battery thrown up to repulse any sally of the garrison.—Scene 2. The amateurs enter the Campo through an embrasure, astride an eight pounder,—promenade along the Prado, tripping over branches lopped by the town guns; also stumbling on the

stone benches. "Take care! Come away from the river side. They'll see you, and fire." "Let them fire! I'll not break my shins any longer in the shade of the trees there."—"Speak low near the water, the voice will carry across it to the arsenal." A fierce whisper from a house in the Calle Sendeca—" *Quien vive?*" Our reply, very quick, " *Carlos Quinto!*" A range of tall barrels, filled with clay, bars the way. "Turn in through this falling house—now out at the stable—up through the hayloft—down into the street."—Scene 3. "Eh! where's the next passage? We are at fault. The arsenal battery has knocked another lot of houses down to Eguia since I was last here. *Sentinella*, which is the way to the Church of San Agustin to night?" " *Por aqui, Señores*. One at a time. Step on the dog-kennel—over the wall—up the bank—under the hedge and across the ruins of the Convent." "Did that ball go through your *Boyna* or mine?" "No, no, neither! they're not firing at us at all." "I wish they would aim at us, and then perhaps the perverse balls would go somewhere else. What a heap of ruins! the world turned upside down, and the pantiles transformed to paving stones! A fine place, if one had daylight, to make observations on the strength and stress of materials." "Keep moving! get through this rubbish of the outskirts

of the convent, and you'll see something worth looking at."—Scene 4. The grand Church and a rousing *Faccioso* festival within. "What have we here? Alloway's auld haunted kirk, or the vault of the witches in *Macbeth*, or the fac-simile of *St. Rosalie's* aisle in *Robert Le Diable*? 'Tis a purgatorial scene of the finest glow, well worthy of a pen and ink sketch."—*Imprimus*. Nave, transept, choir, altar, pillars and side aisles lit up by watch fires—the roof destroyed in various parts by shells,—the sky and stars looking in,—a broad breach near the high altar to the N.E. Soldiers dispersed around the fires, singing, laughing and shouting; others heard in the upper galleries, and occasionally seen, as the fitful flame of fresh fuel springs up, or the flashes of the muskets reveal their positions. Sand bags placed in the choir, the organ loft and the galleries; behind these they blaze away through windows and loop holes at the town walls. Christino voices and muskets replying at the other side of the Cathedral-close, about ten yards across. Very abusive warfare heard through the roof, going on somewhere in the sky, in the region of the weathercock! One fellow mounts a ladder to exchange Homeric compliments at a high window. What a Billingsgate language the Spanish is! How admirably adapted for *recitativo a la distancia*! Not a syllable is lost on either side, even

amidst the fusillade. "*Viva la Reyna Gobernadora la puta!*" (Ping!) "*Muerto a Carlos Quinto el hipocriton!*" (Ping!) "The Urbanos have excellent lead in their bullets! See how perfectly they flatten on this pillar. But don't sit on that rubbish, most of the glass granades fall just there:—very ugly things. I saw the nose of one poor fellow, sitting just where you are, blown clean off by one of them, and his *cañana* full of cartridges take fire round about him at the same moment. Keep near the portal, under the choir. 'Tis the only sanctuary left. Your head's safe there. Then, if the grenade falls near you, look out for the shelter of a pillar. That fellow on the ladder will certainly be shot. Listen to him." "Tell me, you starvelings, what's the price of horseflesh in the town markets to day<sup>1</sup>? (Ping!) How many of you have boiled your belts for broth yet? (Ping!) If you have strength enough left, throw me your shoes, and I'll pelt you with a ration of potatoes? (Ping!) How does the ounce of rice and half ounce of oil, and no biscuit *per diem*, agree with you as fighting diet?" (Ping! Ping!) "He's down; ladder, musket and all, clattering on the Bishop's

<sup>1</sup> Extract from the correspondence of the *Morning Chronicle*, dated Bilbao, Dec. 25 :—"A list of prices of provisions has been shown me, namely :—Horse-flesh, 2s. 2d. a pound; half a cat, 2s. 2d.; an egg, 1s. 1d.; a fowl, £1. 1s. 8d."

“gilded tomb!” “Is he dead?” “Not he! There he goes, pursuing something with his gun. ’Tis a general chase!” (Bang! bang! bang! on the floor!) “What’s the matter, *Señor official*?” “They threw a cat in at the window, Señores. It alighted on the head of that noisy fellow and clawed him down. (Bang!) There—he’s shot it! away he goes up the ladder to fling it back.” “Ha! you sons of Moors, there’s a feast for you. There’s *Maria Christina Gato* again, with an ounce of lead for stuffing. (Ping!) Make much of her and stew her for a ragout; and take care you don’t die of a surfeit. (Ping!) We’ll throw you some *Ratos* for a dessert. They say *Espartero* is coming with English beef for your dinners; but he can’t find the way up the river, and the *Trincaduras* have lost their oars, and the pilots are sea sick. The *Chacoli* of Biscay disagrees with his Excellency’s digestion, and they have put on his night cap and put him to bed and applied twenty leeches to his big toe, but he can get no rest or sleep, with *Castor*’s noise at his door. (Ping!) Have a warming-pan ready for him when he arrives to visit the ruins of Bilbao. (Ping!) They say he sent to England for planks to mend the bridge of Luchana, and make rafts to cross the *Ria Asua*. Aye, the English are coming and so is Christmas! (Ping!) What’s become of the battalions of *Toro* and *Truxillo* and *Compos-*

tella? (Ping!) We never see any of them now a days. I took a pair of trowsers from each of them, and very thin they were! (Ping! Ping!) When you make another sortie, please to put on good ones,—(Ping!)—if you have any? *Guarda! granada!* In it came through the window, a long train of sparks curvetting over the head of the hero of the ladder. “Run, my hearties: lend us a pillar!” “It fell very soft. Did it alight on any one?” “Now, silence for the explosion!” “It’s very long about it! Is Aprice sitting on it? The best man kicks it and says—burst!” “Bravo Navarro, take care of your toes!”—“*O la! ’sta Perro!* ’twas a dead dog with a squib tied to his tail!”—“Throw him back after *Christina Gato* for *raciones!*”—“Now listen to the splendid chorus, *Viva Don Carlos!* which only wants the accompaniment of the organ (burnt) to produce a magnificent effect.” “Where does that passage lead?”—“To a very unhealthy spot, the outer barricade of the town towards the arsenal. Let us explore the other side.”—Scene 5. “What new purgatorian depths are here? and who’s that rising from the grave, with shovel and pistols?” “A miner: ’tis a new sinking; but hush! that’s a secret; we’re only waiting for five quintals of powder to blow that *Palacio Quintina* out of the *Calle Sendeca* into the air, and then we enter Bilbao. You may perceive how well our soldiers

abstain from allusion to it in the midst of their nonsense, lest we should be countermined a second time. Now hasten home to bed before the day breaks, or the silver tassels may be knocked off our *Boynas* as we round the hill into the Campo Volantin."



## CHAPTER V.

ON the morning of the 20th December at day-break, we perceived that Espartero had commenced the construction of another bridge of boats; beginning at the east of the river Nervion, to which a great part of his force had already crossed in launches; but had left it unfinished for want of a sufficient number to reach across to Desierto. His troops, however, continued to march from Portugalete to the Convent during several hours, during which, all was activity on the mountains, preparing batteries to receive them. It was evident that according to the position they were taking up upon the hills at the mouth of the Ria Asua, they were intent on forcing a passage across it—either upon rafts or by mending one of the two bridges—Asua or Luchana. Viewing the latter as much the more probable, Eguia on the 21st advanced a twenty-four pounder from the inner angle

of the road under the precipice of Monte de Cabras, beyond the promontory to the shelter of an old powder magazine at the commencement of the causeway which leads directly to the bridge, a couple of hundred yards off. The same morning, about eight o'clock, a fire was opened by the Carlist mountain guns on a small black Spanish schooner and a couple of *trincaduras* that lay under Desierto. They replied, and a brisk cannonade was kept up all the morning; a Portuguese colonel of artillery had his arm shattered here. Previous to the fire, Eguia sent to the colonel of the first battalion of Castile, posted nearest to Desierto, to order a message to be conveyed to the Commander of the English brig-of-war lying there (*the Saracen*); requesting him to shift his stern out of the line of fire, as the Carlists did not wish to hurt his vessel, notwithstanding it had fired on them thrice. The colonel replied, with all due submission, that it would be quite useless, as the English would certainly fire on or capture the party; that they had received no provocation for their former fire, and that it would only be a waste of life, similar to that in the case of the *Parlamentario* sent to Bilbao. Eventually, no message was sent, but the colonel was desired to be on the look out, to receive any boat that might arrive from the ships, and explain accordingly. I could not

hear that the brig suffered any damage in this affair, or renewed her fire that day against the hills. The only notice taken of the cross fire, was hauling her a little out of the way—a movement which confirmed the Carlists in the notion that the British commander was sufficiently aware that they were not firing at him. Two deserters arrived at Banderas the same day from Erandio, miserably clad (one without shirt, cap, or shoes). Another from the Vitoria side, a sergeant in full uniform,—a very fine fellow, who would not take the offered (and usual) bounty of ten dollars, saying, “I did not come hither to receive money.” Twenty-five of the Royal Guard, good-looking men, and very well equipped, came from the same side a few hours afterwards.

On the evening of the 21st, Gomez and some of his staff rode to Olaveaga, summoned by the Prince Don Sebastian to assist at a council of war consisting of Generals Villarreal, Eguia, S. de Torre, Urbiztondo, Moreno, Goñi, P. Sanz, Elio, Guerguè, Joaquin Montenegro, Sylvestre, Sarasa, and others. Gomez is a fine-looking man, apparently about 45 years of age, robust and rather broad-shouldered, with calm intelligent blue eyes, light brown hair and a clear English complexion,—the least resembling a Spaniard, or one whose talent lay in rapid marching, of any I had seen in authority in

Spain. The subject of discussion in the council was understood to be, the propriety of attempting to take Bilbao by storm. The question was decided in the negative—the general opinion being that the garrison could not hold out many days in the absence of supplies, and that if Espartero was obliged to retreat a fourth time, Bilbao would at once surrender in despair. It was known also that the opinion of Don Carlos was much opposed to the plan of proceeding by assault, on the grounds of compassion for the inhabitants, whose prolonged and energetic resistance had considerably irritated the besiegers;—so the motives of humanity and policy both tending to the same conclusion, it was readily adopted, and the council unanimously agreed to abide the issue of the contest about to commence on the banks of the Ria Asua. Gomez returned to Orduña next morning for his troops, and took up a position with his infantry to strengthen the left of the Carlist line of defence over Burseña and Castrejana. His cavalry were sent across the river to the valley of Asua, to be in readiness to act against those of Carandolet, if they should again attempt to take possession of the plains on that side of San Domingo. He was now safely at home again among the hills, where his pursuers did not dare to follow him,—knowing that he could safely turn and stand and bid them defiance. His force in cavalry

was thrice as great as that which accompanied Espartero; and it was confidently anticipated that if another opportunity occurred similar to that which was lost at Asua on the 5th December, the lancers who had followed him from Andalusia and Algarves would turn it to such good account, that the war would end for the winter by the establishment of *Cuartel Real* in Bilbao.

Monte Areagas now became the scene of active operations, and the head-quarters of the besiegers of Bilbao—themselves besieged in the mountains. It is the highest point on the northern extremity of the range of San Domingo and Archanda, directly opposed to the heights of Ondis and Erandio occupied by the Christinos, and separated from them by the ravine in which the Ria Asua flows east and west. When the tide is in, this little estuary is impassable even by cavalry; but at the ebb, children walk across at the village of Asua half a mile to the east in the plain. The latter was the point of attack on Espartero's last visitation; but the loop-holed walls and trifling breastworks thrown up on its southern bank by the Carlists, sufficed to arrest the progress of his column, 12,000 strong. His reliance in the renewed attack, seemed to be on artillery, and certainly there appeared to be a great improvement in that branch of his service. On the morning of the 22nd, he opened a fire of fifteen .

pieces across the Ria against the Carlist artilleros on Monte Areagas and its lower hills to the west adjoining Monte de Cabras, where the little Ria disembogues into the Nervion. Their practice was very superior to their former efforts. The granades burst right over the Carlist guns, apparently within two or three yards, and at each shot, those at a distance supposed that some must be killed or wounded. But no!—the artilleros were alive and at work again, and, strange to say, not a man was wounded on the hills that morning, although the Christinos kept up a brisk fire for two hours at them. This was perhaps to be attributed to the Carlist practice of firing with single guns, selecting the best position for each, and working with as few men as possible. Had there been a grand battery and a crowd, the Christino shells must have done mischief. The Carlist twenty-four pounder on the road behind the broken bridge of Luchana, was firing all day at the encampment on the heights of Ondis. The Christinos there replied with shells, and those in the convent of Desierto with a thirty-two pounder. The latter had considerably the advantage in point of position, as well as calibre, and the shot and shells struck very closely. In the course of the morning a *trincadura* came up with the tide from the lower side of the Convent, and sent three or four Congreve rockets at the twenty-

four pounder. As soon as this gun was brought to bear on the water, the little vessel prudently put her helm about, and we saw no more of her.

The weather had now grown very misty, and for the last three days it was with difficulty that distant operations could be discovered. We could however perceive on the 22nd, that the Christino bridge of boats was completed, and lay beyond the Carlist cannonade, behind the high promontory of Desierto. We could also see that Espartero kept all his forces on the heights, where his right rested on the precipitous quarries of Aspe, with the Ria Nervion beneath; his left over Erandio (the Carlists occupied the village, and all the plain beyond); and his rear on Lexona and Algorta. The Carlist posts were advanced on the right to the height of Umbe, beyond Luchoa and Sondica. Their left extended across the river and valley of Bilbao, to the bridge of Castrejana; but all operations were confined to its right bank until the morning of the 23rd, when a detachment from Desierto threw a bridge of boats across the little estuary, (the Ria Galinda,) and passed over, as they twice before had done, to Baracaldo and Burseña. Their immediate object was the occupation of a couple of houses under the heights of Routegui, at the confluence of the Rias Nervion and Salcedon, and thereby to flank the Carlist twenty-four

pounder planted in front of the promontory of Monte de Cabras, which guarded the bridge of Luc-hana, and swept the causeway and heights beyond, to the great annoyance of Espartero. This they effected without opposition, as the Carlists were only on the south of the Ria Salcedon. The Christinos then blazed away from doors and windows at the artilleros who worked the gun, and the result was that the Carlists were obliged to withdraw it, having neglected to take the precaution of placing a parapet on the river's brink to their left, for its protection. This unfortunate movement left the causeway open to the Christinos; and was one of the principal causes of their subsequent triumphal entry into Bilbao on the 25th. Their success in this quarter led to renewed efforts: two guns were brought out of Desierto, and planted on the heights of Baracaldo and Routegui, whence they threw shrapnell-shells against Monte de Cabras and also tried to cover a new attempt to throw their pontoon bridge over the Ria Salcedon to the Baya of Saroza, and so march along the Ria Nervion to Bilbao. To counteract this movement, Gomez brought down his men to the quarantine ground, and lined the levées and parapets at the water's edge; so that the Christinos effected nothing further on the left of the Nervion, and again turned their attention towards the right, where their fifteen guns were already established.



Eguia on his part planted three 16-pounders in addition, on the central height of Monte Areagas, and a brisk exchange of shot and shells took place on the 23d and 24th.

Winter at last set in, with an intensity that left no doubt of the matter in either camp. The hills were enveloped in heavy mists that carried still heavier showers, varied occasionally by snow and hail storms, and by thunder that silenced the cannonade :—all driving in from the Bay of Biscay with a cutting northerly breeze which sometimes singularly intermitted its severity and allowed one to enjoy an autumnal relaxation of half-an-hour—just to enable all concerned to appreciate its searching influence throughout flesh, blood and bone the minute after. The Carlist forces were tolerably well housed. The artillery and advanced posts, indeed, suffered considerably, having only rude huts of their own hasty construction to shelter them ; but all the infantry not actually on duty enjoyed at least “good dry lodging” at night. This phrase (which stares a traveller through Ireland, in the face, one-hundred times a-day, outside as many hovels, as he crosses the country) is intended to assure him that he will find nothing to eat or drink within ; but in the camp before Bilbao, (although the Basque soldiers can live on very little, and do without pay month after month) their

rations were luxury to what the Irish peasant contrives to subsist on. They have white wheaten bread and meat every day, with fish and *alubias* (the small white beans of the provinces) to compensate for occasional deficiencies of beef. The Christino troops I believe, were much worse off, except in the article of clothing (although one deserter came from their camp on the 21st, without cap, shirt, shoes, or even sandals, yet the majority were excellently clad). A *parlementa* took place the 22d across the Ria Asua, in which the Carlists showed their white bread, and challenged their opponents to do the same; but the Christinos, having only ammunition biscuits, prudently declined the exposure, although they assured the Carlists "they could if they would."

These parleys frequently occurred in the pauses of conflict, and indicated a considerable change for the better in the conduct of this savage war. The persevering mercy exhibited by the Carlists in their successive advantages before Bilbao, was attended with the good effect of making an impression on the mass of the Christino troops, although their legislators in Madrid appeared to be proceeding in as sanguinary a spirit as ever. I was a spectator of the amicable rencontre of the 22d, and was highly gratified by the good manners displayed on both sides. It was commenced by

a Christino officer walking down unarmed from their batteries on the heights of Erandio on the extreme left of their position, to the banks of the Ria Asua, and hailing a Carlist officer who was posted with his company behind the levée which bordered a little peninsula, formed by a sweep of the Ria towards the Christino camp; a very strong position which the Carlists had occupied to great advantage in the previous battle on the 5th. The Christino began the conversation by declaring, that the English and French were both laughing at them as uncivilized partisans who could not lay by their hostility for a moment, and talk about the weather and the news of the day, like other people. The Carlist replied, that he desired nothing better; so they chatted about their rations and their acquaintances and the news from Andalusia, and who was killed and wounded, and all that: they spent a sociable half-hour together—the numbers augmenting, on the Christino side to about twenty (all artilleros), and on the Carlist to at least 150. I did not hear a loud word. The officers had the principal share of the conversation to themselves, but the *soldados* could not repress their propensity to have a joke with each other. The Carlists asked whither the new comers were going? The Christinos begged leave to inform them, they were on their way to visit Bilbao, to spend their Christmas

there—with their permission? The Carlists politely pointed out the shortest route, where they might swim across; but the travellers preferred taking the trouble of mending their bridges for them. Both agreed in cursing the weather although it came with *los días de la Natividad*, and in wishing that the war was settled for the winter by one decisive battle. The roads had become execrable in the mountains. I could not imagine their depth till the 23d, when my mule stuck fast in one, as I was crossing out of the way of the shells. Gomez declared that, bad as the roads were in the Sierra Morena, they were still better than the paths of Banderas. Yet a train of eight or ten mules whirled the artillery up and across them in the most astonishing style. When there was time to spare, from six to sixteen oxen plodded along through every obstacle, slowly and surely; but while the Christino shells were flying in every direction, not a moment could be lost; although the wind, hail or snow in direct opposition, often rendered it almost an impossibility to transport the heavy guns to the heights.

The season was indeed most untimely for mountain operations, and we all felt confident that the Christinos, exposed as they were, could not possibly stand it another day; but would either retreat in despair to the shelter of Desierto and

Portugalete again, or make a desperate effort to force their way to Bilbao. Villarreal was determined to have the first blow, and at 9 o'clock on the morning of the 24th, marched by the bridge of Asua to attack them. The Carlist forces descended the hills in three columns, intent on storming the position taken up by Espartero on the heights of Erandio. Brigadier General Guerguè led the right, Goñi the centre, and Pablo Sanz the left. Soon after they had passed Asua and the right wing had commenced the attack,—the snow storm which had only threatened and sprinkled before, came on with violence, driven by a wind of piercing chilliness, right into their faces, so that they could not see their way. The bridge of Asua which had been only temporarily repaired with planks, afforded but a slippery and dangerous passage. Several fell into the Ria beneath. Amongst others, Colonel Ivarola, whose horse slipped off, hurting him severely in the fall, and finally drowning him ere he could be extricated. The movement was of necessity countermanded, and all returned to the mountains. (*Vide Appendix C.*)

## CHAPTER VI.

DURING the attack on the Christino position at Erandio on the morning of the 24th, the bridge and causeway at Luchana on the extreme left of Villarreal's line, to the east of the Ria Nervion remained unguarded; and whilst the great majority of his forces were collected at the extreme right, awaiting a fine hour to recommence the attack on the opposite heights, the Christinos took advantage of the thick snow-storm to make a lodgement on the bridge of Luchana and causeway beyond. Their launches and *trincaduras* came sweeping up about four o'clock, unperceived<sup>1</sup> in the snow-storm, and landed men, planks, &c. to mend the bridge; then briskly cannonaded the advanced guard in the old powder magazine at the Carlist end of the causeway where the twenty-four-pound gun had

<sup>1</sup> Vide Col. Wyld's Report, Appendix F.

stood. The river battery, to which it had been moved in the rear, replied, but the Christinos on the causeway could not be touched thereby. They rushed on, took possession of the advanced guard-house, and thus opened the road for others to follow up the advantage and obtain a footing on the hills. Their reinforcements, on the watch for their success, speedily arrived over the mended bridge, or beside it, on rafts prepared and arranged there (as we afterwards learnt) by the sailors of the *Saracen* and *Ringdove*. The Carlists, who were concentrated on the Asua side, nearly two miles off, could not possibly arrive in time to repulse them at the available moment. Emboldened by the success of their surprise, the Christinos next marched round the point of the promontory of Monte de Cabras, and advanced to seize the twenty-four and eight pounders in the river battery abovementioned. At this instant, Lord Ranelagh and Lieut. Bell (one of the English volunteers, who arrived on the 6th December) entered the battery, having run thither from Olaveaga at the first sound of the cannonade. The guard consisted of between thirty or forty men who cheerfully obeyed the call of the gallant volunteers, followed them along the narrow road, and drove back the assailants round the promontory. This was a doubly hazardous exploit, for the entire line of the road was exposed

to the fire of a division of the troops of Gomez, who were placed on the shore of the opposite Baya of Saroza—an excellent position for flanking the road—but, in such weather, amidst storm and darkness they could not possibly discriminate between foes and friends. It was only after the latter heard the bullets whizzing amongst them, and made themselves hoarse shouting across the water, "*Viva Carlos Quinto!*" that the friendly fire ceased. The little Carlist party had now made their way through both fires and against the snow-storm, within view of the captured guard-house. The English *Caballeros* still shouted "*Vamos! a la bayonetta!*" intent on retaking it, but the *trin-caduras* were right opposite, blazing at them. The officer of the company declared that he could not allow his men to go forward, "being stationed as a reserve:"—and, in fine, Lord Ranelagh and Lieut. Bell found themselves fighting the gun-boats and "the Column" (as the Carlists term the mass of Christinos usually brought against them) with five men at their back—and wisely retired to the battery. At such moments, battles are won or lost. The Christinos won this time.

The "Column" now arrived across the mended bridge, fought its way step by step all night up the hills of Monte de Cabras and Archanda, bravely opposed by the scattered and unprepared Carlist



guerillas, who it was believed (by their Generals) were sufficiently numerous to hold any force in check till morning, when a formal attack was intended. The Carlists however soon discovered that it was something serious, and an energetic effort was made about nine o'clock to repulse the attack, but without success. A second and a third attempt were made about midnight to dislodge the assailants from two houses they had taken possession of half-way up the hill, between the river and fort Banderas; but all failing, in consequence of the continual arrival of reinforcements, the besiegers were at length undeceived, and found, too late, that the enemy had passed the bridge and ascended the heights in force sufficient to scatter before them the few opponents who overhung their path;—and ere the Carlist generals could form their battalions in any thing like an efficient order of battle, to withstand the assault, they were out-flanked, and obliged to retreat from Banderas leaving fifteen pieces of cannon, with all their acquisitions and Bilbao itself in the hands of Espartero. An hour before day-break, the troops on the Archanda hills, having actually fired away all their ammunition, retired along the ridge of San Domingo; the infantry to Galdacano and Zornosa, on the road to Durango; and the artillery to Guernica, by the Munguia route. The troops

under Gomez and Count Mortara, on the far side of the Ria, in Saroza, Castrejana and San Mamès, got safely off before day-break to Alonsotegui;—thence to Llodio and Miravalles, and joined the army at Zornosa. The retreat was made in the best order, in silence, and in a style far from desponding. The men would have been just as ready to fight the hour afterwards, if they had been supplied with ammunition. But Espartero pushed on—or as it now appears *was pulled out of bed and pushed on* by his English friends; and gained his point of throwing succours into Bilbao.

This misfortune arose, in a great degree, from the unequal distribution of the Carlist forces on that occasion, the weak guard of thirty or forty men left at the advanced guard-house and its battery, under Monte de Cabras, and the very inefficient works erected and precautions taken for the defence of such important positions. Only one of the three arches of Luchana bridge was broken down; no parapet was built, or trenches dug to obstruct the passage of troops along the causeway when once the bridge was rendered passable by planks;—an operation that was rather favoured by the shelter of the remains of the loophole fort at the Carlist side of the bridge. Neither were any trenches dug, or stockades planted at the point of the precipice of Monte de Cabras, which completely

commanded the causeway, where a junction existed between road and mountain so slight, that it was a mere path through a gap in the causeway-wall, passing under the eaves of the advanced guard-house. It could, with the slightest precaution, have been rendered impregnable;—admitting as it did of only a single man at a time. Again, the twenty-four pounder stationed at this guard-house (the old powder magazine) for the defence of the bridge and road, was left unprotected on its river flank by casks or fascines; so that, when the Christinos took possession of the houses on the opposite bank, and filled them with sharpshooters, the artilleros were obliged to retreat with their gun to the river battery in the rear. The bridge, the causeway and entrance to the mountains were from that moment left defenceless. The force under Gomez in the Baya of Saroza at the opposite side of the Nervion might perhaps have turned the tide of battle if they had been provided with any means of crossing over to the scene of action; but the nearest of the two bridges of boats which Eguia had constructed over the river at Olaveaga, was above a mile distant from the point of attack; and Gomez' troops could only fire in the dark across the water at their friends and enemies alike.

Colonel Americ fell on the Christino side in this attack, and Colonel Carmora on the Carlist. The

latter was brought on horseback to the house of General Eguia, at Banderas ;—but he died at the foot of the staircase. Others, seriously wounded, lay on the floors and passages, unable to descend the hills to the hospital at Olaveaga ; 132 were however received there by the surgeons during that night and the previous day (of these a few were Christino prisoners) of which 111 had been wounded after the bridge was forced in the evening. The majority were but slightly injured, and their wounds being fresh, contrived to escape across the bridge of boats to the other side of the river, and join Gomez in his retreat ere the Christino lancers came dashing on. The surgeons Obrador, Garcia and Tristan also escaped at the last moment, together with several of their patients, among whom were General Pablo Sanz (who was wounded in the morning), Colonel Riente, Colonel Silva, Commandante Muños of the artillery, who was wounded in the head (the second time during the siege), and Captain Bessieres. The latter had on the 23rd been struck by lightning in Fort Banderas, which is indeed a most liable position, standing seaward on the brow of a sharp steep narrow hill, exposed to the first influence of whatever thunder cloud may sweep inland from the Bay of Biscay.

Several poor fellows who escaped from the hospitals having wounds in the legs, had to join

and support each other right and left, as they limped half clad in their bed clothes over the mountain snows, in a long and painful circuit, to seek shelter at Galdacano, Zornosa, or Munguia. Captain Vial who had suffered amputation of a leg at Olaveaga, had (on the arrival of Espartero's reinforcements) been removed, along with some others, for greater safety to Guernica. Count de Coetlogon, of the Engineers, who had been arduously engaged in his department all day and half the night, had lain down to snatch an hour's repose, and did not awake till the Christinos lancers came galloping along under his windows, when he fled for his life, on bare feet, across the bridge of boats, and over the snowy heights of Castrejana and Llodio, to headquarters at Galdacano. Don Luis Peseto, Ayudante of General Sylvestre, who was engaged to the last in getting the artillery and ammunition up the hill of Archanda, was taken prisoner, to the great regret of every one. He had particularly distinguished himself in the assaults on San Mamès and Burseña, to which latter place he had gone as *Parlementario*. He afterwards went on a similar dangerous mission to the gate of San Agustín at Bilbao, where he was wounded by an accidental shot. Another Carlist officer who fell into the enemy's hands on this occasion, was Commandante Trovo of the artillery, who happens to be

rather deaf, and slept soundly that night in his usual quarters in Olaveaga, after a hard day's work on the hills. As he was riding at day-break, up the side of Monte de Cabras to Fort Banderas, to relieve a brother officer, he passed some soldiers at the Capuchin convent, hastening down in uniforms that appeared rather strange to his eye, and much newer than what Gomez's weather-beaten battalions could be expected to bring from Galicia round about by Algesiras. But Espartero's troops were continually deserting, and these might be a company of the *passados* getting into quiet quarters out of the way of their old friends; so he hastened on to take his share in the expected battle, until an officer, also on the way down, told him he was a prisoner! "A prisoner! you're joking; who are you?" exclaimed Trovo. "General Oraa!" was the reply. In fact, the fight was over before the Carlists thought it was well begun, and I am surprised that more were not taken.

Baron Plessin, a Prussian officer of Artillery, and Lieutenant Roche, were left ill in Olaveaga, along with about fifty privates, wounded too seriously to admit of removal. Their treatment was the subject of deep anxiety to all, and from the incendiary mode of warfare usually adopted by the Christinos, and acted on the instant the Carlists retreated; we feared that it must have been very

deplorable. Scarcely had the assailants reached the house occasionally occupied by General Eguia and his staff on the heights of Banderas (and which, from its proximity to the fort and scene of conflict, had become a passing receptacle for the wounded and dying)—when they gave it to the flames. However, the presence of their English allies was probably a check on the indulgence of their tastes, and the prisoners received no further annoyance than what resulted from the hooting and pelting bestowed on them by the women of the town. I am happy also in the opportunity of stating that the wounded, who were found in the hospital of Olaveaga, were very well treated by Espartero. He placed a guard at the door in the first instance, and sent an officer round to assure them of protection; adding, that, if they wished, the Queen would receive them into her service. No response was uttered by the brave fellows; and to the credit of Espartero it must be told, that he further assured them that their fidelity to Don Carlos would make no difference in their fate. The books of the Carlist hospitals contained 790 entries. Of these about 400 belonged to the former siege under Villarreal, and 340 to the latter. Of this gross number 104 were artilleros. I know not exactly the number of killed in the November and December operations, but I am credibly assured

that the Carlists slain in the last night attack did not exceed 210; fifty of the wounded subsequently died, which made a total of 260.

The Christino accounts relative to the relief of Bilbao teemed with mis-statements. Colonel Wylde declared in his letter to Lord Palmerston, that they had taken the whole of the Carlist artillery, which in Espartero's despatch was enumerated at 25 pieces. The correspondent of *The Morning Chronicle* asserts that there were twenty-eight pieces taken, and amongst them the monster mortar. The fact is, that the Carlists had latterly twenty-three pieces at the siege; of these eight were carried safely off, the large mortar inclusive, (saved by the *Cura Merino*, who tackled his own horses to the carriage), and only fifteen were captured. Another "official account of the artillery taken at the siege of Bilbao," is published by the *Moniteur*. This estimate extends to twenty-four, which are all carefully specified, and includes "nine pieces of various sizes on the Baracaldo side,"—where the Carlists had not a single gun! These were probably the pieces sent across the *Ria Galinda* from *Desierto* on the 23rd December. As to "the immense *materiel*," spoken of, we may judge of the real extent of it, by the fact that *Eguia* had, at the time the siege was raised, neither powder to spring his mine, long prepared under the town wall, nor to



keep up his fire of shells on the batteries ; and, at the crisis when Espartero's troops carried the heights of Banderas, the Carlist battalions that guarded it all night, had fired away their last cartridge, and retired *nolens volens*.

The Christino losses were much more serious in this affair. The Correspondent of *The Morning Chronicle*, who entered Bilbao with Espartero on the 25th December, writes on the 29th, "The returns of the loss on the Queen's side are not yet made up: but it is calculated at about 900; of whom from 200 to 250 were killed. Among the latter was the brave Commandante Ulibarrena, who commanded the light companies *d'elite* during the daring attack on the night of the 24th. The Baron de Meer, and General Mendez Vigo were wounded, but not dangerously." The following extract from the same correspondence (January 15, 1837) gives the loss suffered by the Urbanos *only*, during the sieges. That of the garrison, must have been considerably greater. "An official return has just been published, by which it appears that the loss on the part of the National Guard of Bilbao, and the company of the neighbouring village of Deusto, from the 23rd of October, when the siege began (for there were but three days between the departure and return of the Carlists),—to the 25th of December, was 40 killed, and

154 wounded ; total 194, out of 800, or about one-fourth. Of the killed, seven were officers, and six non commissioned officers."

Although the contest on the causeway and the hills, was in progress from four P.M. on Christmas eve to four o'clock on Christmas morning, many believed it impossible that the Carlist position could be stormed, and some of my friends lost their baggage in consequence. All were in false security : even Don Sebastian remained within five minutes' ride of the enemy an hour after they had passed the bridge. The English amateurs had ordered a Christmas dinner in the Palacio Monteforte on the good old plan of "every man his dish," and invited Count Mortara, Count Boos-Valdeck, &c., to the attack. There were few "delicacies of the season" within our reach. Not a grain of flour could be begged, borrowed, or stolen for plum-pudding, apple-dumpling, or pastry of any kind ; nor could anything be discovered that bore the most distant resemblance to a plum. We did, however, contrive to muster a sufficiency of substitutes, and without doubt would have done justice to them if permitted, but the incessant peals of cannon and musketry on the evening of the 24th, engrossed our attention so thoroughly, that we all took to the hills (either to join in the fray to keep watch for the consequences) from whence we never descended at

the Bilbao side, although hungry enough before dinner-time next day. Lord Ranelagh, Lieut. Bell, and the son of Colonel B——, ran into the fight, while I, being a man of peace, ran out of it;—holding fast by my mule, which carried all my little baggage on the good old saddle-bag principle, and preserved it for me, too, with the exception of a few articles taken prisoners in the hands of my laundress. Keeping our backs to the fitful snow-storms that swept up and over the hills from the Bay of Biscay and the Christinos, we passed the night in comparative comfort and security—both occasionally getting shelter in Fort Banderas, or Eguia's head quarters, adjacent, when the storm was "too bad," and both (for we dared not part company) occasionally taking advantage of a gleam of moonshine to look down on the double line of fires which all night long came up the mountain nearer and nearer. At this elevation we were completely in the clouds, which, although saluting us on Christmas morning, were not in the least inclined to conviviality. A piercing arrival of sleety hail about an hour before sunrise, had sent me to endeavour to thaw myself, amongst the wounded, around the brazero in the General's drawing-room strewed with beds, mattresses and palliasses, on which men, women and children reposed indiscriminately. Scarcely had I got into

a warm corner out of the smoke and the crowd, when a hurried order was heard in the stable below, and, as it were, rushing in a wind of troubled voices up the stairs: "*Adelante! Ellos vienen!*"<sup>1</sup>—Instantly the sleepers, the weary, and the wounded started to their feet; all who were able, rushed down stairs and out of the house, carrying with them whatever little articles of clothing, bedding or provisions, their strength would enable them. I untied my mule, mounted, and joined the troops, retiring from Banderas and already on their route to Galdacano. The soldiers marched leisurely and in excellent order, in three or four single files, along the ridge of San Domingo. There was no running, no floundering,—not a voice heard. The only race I heard of was that made by an Alavese, who was taken prisoner by the Christinos in the conflict at Banderas. Having good clothes on, he was stripped of them in a twinkling, as a preliminary operation—and while his conquerors were occupied for a moment in dividing the spoils, he started off as naked as the day he was born, and escaped unhurt amidst a hundred bullets that whizzed after him.

A night march through deep snow and mire, was nothing to the Carlist Army. "They were

<sup>1</sup> "Forward! THEY are coming!"

used to it!" and nobody uttered a word of complaint. I never saw hardier or more docile troops. It was, indeed, an extraordinary scene. A silent and continuous current of both sexes and all ages, passed lightly along the heights, bearing burthens of every shape. On the right, Bilbao lay sleeping in darkness, broken only by a great watch-fire in the Plaza Nueva. The Carlist sentinels had withdrawn unsuspected from Campo Volantin and the Church of San Agustin. Not a shot was fired, nor a shout was heard, although we looked and listened with some anxiety for any intimation of a *sortie*. But it fortunately happened that the garrison still reposed in the same belief that the besiegers had entertained an hour before—that the position could not be forced; and thus the latter escaped the necessity of fighting a second battle, *minus* ammunition and engulfed in the frozen mire of the mountain-sod;—a species of road which in many places could not have been made worse, cut as it was into ruts to the solid rock, beneath the wheels of the ceaseless train of artillery, ammunition and provision cars which had passed over (or rather through it) for the previous two months and a half. My mule's legs disappeared at times, and I thought that she carried weight enough without me; so I jumped off and plunged on before, till I discovered that mules, horses, and riders, more heavily laden,

passed me with ease, that my right ankle was sprained, that we were going slower than ever, and that the General's house was blazing behind us! This was enough. I found myself in the saddle again! the mule made a discovery that I wore spurs, and thenceforth walked through the slough with comparative ease. Villarreal ordered the 1st of Castile to our rear, to keep pursuers in check, but Espartero, astonished at his success, marched peaceably down into Bilbao, and the danger was over.

Descending along the high road to Munguia, on the eastern side of San Domingo at day-break, to overtake the escort of the Infante, Don Sebastian—I met about one hundred lancers of Gomez, issuing out of their night quarters in the farm-houses of the plain, and the villages of Derio and Zamudio; riding up to the scene of action quite unconcernedly, like people well used to counter-marches, and all that<sup>1</sup>. Although in full retreat

<sup>1</sup> A few days before I reached Estella, a Lieutenant of Lancers, attended by his Orderly, fully armed and accoutred as usual, had arrived there; having come across the country and the Christino lines from Jadraque, near Guadalajara, about 100 leagues, with a despatch from Gomez, announcing his victory over Lopez. I treated the story as a romance at the time, and did not mention it in my correspondence; but from the recent confirmation I received I now believe it, and can only account for it by the devotion of the great majority of the peasantry of both Castilles to the cause of the King.

myself, I stood in silent admiration as they slowly and singly rode along. Such another horde might be sought for in vain at this side of Caucasus! Their steeds were of all breeds and qualities, from the spirited and fine-limbed Andalusian courser to the Gallician shelty. But the riders! How shall I describe them? Wrapped up in their endless carpets, cloaks or blankets, of every variety of pattern dyed or worn in Spain,—which covered the mouths, noses and even whole heads of several,—while their lance pennons fluttered above—they looked much more like natives of Asia or Africa, than of Europe! The Captain came on with a large shawl wound into a turban, between which and his blanket-cloak, his Copt-like eyes were only to be seen. Two or three followed, with silk handkerchiefs for head gear,—their dark eyes gleaming out of careworn hollow sockets, over very grim-bearded and sallow visages;—their black blankets rolled round and round their limbs till they formed a solid bundle on their saddle, where they sat, “all as one, as a piece of the ship,” (as the sailors say;) and at a little distance might be taken for old women astride, or witches with their long broomsticks, or anything but the soldiers they were! Next came a splendid fellow on a “bit of blood,” his spurs tied on his (almost) naked heels, (I think his spur leathers formed his boots,) with

his bare neck and head rising boldly through the hole in his blanket;—looking fiercely around with an air of reckless defiance, only to be paralleled by that of the Saracen's Head on Snow-hill. After him came a fellow without a cloak, a splendid Turkish bluebeard, white linen trowsers, and the cap of an English recruiting sergeant, ribbons and all! Then came Don Cossacks, Circassians, Armenians, Sierra Morenans, and downright troopers of Castile, bearing lengthy espadons almost reaching to the ground;—(one left-handed fellow wore his on his right),—and their heels armed with ponderous treble horizontal rowels, (fabricated for jingling on the Prado) which seemed as if they would stave in the sides of the lanky animals they came in contact with. Yet more! yet more!

"Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman!"

I might have indulged my curiosity till night-fall—but I was without a penny in my pocket!—a thought which made me hungry by anticipation;—so I rode on and arrived at Munguia, where I overtook Don Sebastian, who kindly gave me a cup of chocolate, and my mule a feed of maize.

At Bermeo, I found that Captain Collins had sailed, so I could obtain no more coffee: however, a friend on the road lent me a dollar, and thus armed both for the present and the future, I rode on



with a lighter heart to Guernica, where I obtained a very seasonable supply from Señora Calle, an apothecary's wife, to whom I bore a banker's order. I was, however, very near being obliged to depend on the merits of the dollar, for the lady neither knew me nor the banker,—the order being drawn upon her in mistake;—but being assured of my identity by Don Juan Montenegro (who was residing there in consequence of the wound he received in the October siege,) she good-naturedly gave me half the amount;—all she had in the house. I discovered afterwards, on my arrival at Bayonne, that she was indebted for the surprise to a mistake of my banker, who had been fairly puzzled by my address in Durango, containing the Basque name of a street in which I resided there, and which he cleverly interpreted as signifying the name of a person! It was *something* "*Calle*," or *somebody* "*Calle*;" so he cut the gordian knot by sending me an order on Señora Calle, the only person of that name he could hear of in the provinces who had any credit in account at Bayonne!

I overtook Mr. Burgess the English surgeon, among the patients at Munguia. He had been attending the hospital at Derio in the plain, on the eastern side of San Domingo, and was thereby saved the necessity of such a hasty retreat as his

brother surgeons on duty in the hospitals of Olaveaga were obliged to make. We afterwards met at Durango and crossed the frontier together.

On arriving at the little fishing village of Mundaca, I halted for dinner at a *posada* where I had stopped once before in a ride round the coast, during a pause in the siege; and had furnished matter of infinite speculation and inquiry to "the daughter of the house," (a fine cheerful, intelligent girl, who ruled everybody within her reach, by her activity and high spirits,) for I was neither *official*, nor *ingeniero*, nor *medico*, nor *ecclesiastico*, nor *marinero*, nor *chocolatero*!—Nay more, I had not told her any news from Bilbao or sat down to my dinner till I obtained some maize for my mule; so I had become impressed on her memory as a very strange species of *viagero*.

I happened on this occasion to be the first who arrived in Mundaca from the camp, and Francesca herself fed my mule, that she might more quickly arrive at my stock of warlike intelligence. I did not like to be the bearer of bad news, and at first endeavoured to avoid her questions;—but she would not be evaded, and soon caught hold of the word "*malo*!"—then crossed herself and sat down as if thunderstruck:—then starting up, took me by both hands—seated me before her, and looking me straight in the face, insisted on knowing all about it!

I never was so cross questioned in my life. It was useless to attempt to cut the matter short, or endeavour to console her. She pushed aside a young Priest who was endeavouring "to catch the Speaker's eye" and expound the misfortune on theological principles.—"We are all sinners, you know, Señor?" said he: *Ergo ego,—ergo Carlos Quinto, &c.*"—I was examined on the tactics, topography, and chronology of the matter,—first in Spanish,—and if I did not catch her meaning, then at the top of her voice in Basquense. After I had proved my practical knowledge of the positions of both armies by sketches in the ashes of the kitchen hearth,—and told her the names of the fugitives following with the Infante—all her hopes of my ignorance or credulity gave way; she sighed "*Perdida la guerra!*"—then sat down in the corner and cried bitterly!

Her mother tried to comfort her and turn her attention to prepare my dinner;—sometimes scolding her heartily for being such a fool as to weep for what could not be helped—"as if that would mend the matter;" &c.—and then the old dame would go about her own work, wringing her hands unconsciously, or pressing them silently and forcibly on the top of her head, as if endeavouring to exclude a fulness of painful thought. The beautiful girl still sat by the fire, rocking herself and weeping;—endeavouring to fry some fish for me,

and occasionally chaunting a low recitative in which her feelings broke out. I could distinguish an extempore triad which ran thus ; " O Vizcaya, *you* are lost ! O Basques, *you* are lost ! O Carlos, *you* are lost !" — Then followed the words "*yo ne—*" repeated several times with a strong emphasis on the latter. The phrase was trivial in itself ; — the mere ordinary abbreviation of " I have *nothing* !" — yet fully expressing by the varied intonations of passionate mourning, the deepest sense of destitution and desolation. I never heard so much heart-felt sorrow concentrated in two words, and never before saw patriotism a passion !

The young Priest had not a word of consolation to offer, but stood in the midst of the floor with his arms folded, his legs astride, his hat pulled over his brows, intently regarding the leg of the kitchen table : — then starting to recollection, he threw down his breviary and bolted into the street.

Presently the neighbours rushed in, half shocked — half incredulous ! — but all highly excited, and anxious to learn the extent of their misfortune. What torrents of Basquense were poured forth as they urged Francesca and her mother to explain how ? — how ? — how it could have happened ? — Was it a surprize ? — or treason ? — or had *los Ingleses* landed ? Never did I hear words uttered in any language (save Irish) with such vehement rapidity, — hard,

rough, rugged and even angular as they were. It was not a flow of language :—the effect on my ear was more like that produced by a score of school-boys jerking stones along the surface of an icy lake, skir !—skir !—skir !—skir-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r !—for a furlong or more ;—while clenched hands,—darkened brows and blanched cheeks revealed the feelings which inspired it. My fish was burning all the while,—Francesca being the centre of intelligence around which every body thronged. She occasionally declaimed as energetically as the rest ;—then again sank into silence, hid her face in her hands—and wept. I heartily forgave her for spoiling my dinner, and felt infinitely relieved when she arose at last, dried her tears, shook her fine head, drew herself up to her full height, and proudly addressed me—“ You leave us now in our adversity—but come hither next spring, and you shall find us conquerors ? The Basques are not women or children to sit down and weep like me over the loss of their own Bilbao. They act—they fight—they suffer—but no matter ; they never despair or sink into slavery : they always conquer at last ! As sure as you sit there, they will lay siege to it a fourth time—aye ! a hundredth time if need be ! You have seen us baffled, and ’tis fitting you should see our triumphs too ;—so if you can enjoy a Basque victory, come to the camp next spring ?”

## CHAPTER VII.

I ARRIVED at Durango on the 27th December, after a three days' ride over the snow from Olaveaga, and found *Cuartel Real* wearing an aspect of unfeigned chagrin. Don Carlos, perhaps, bore the disappointment with greater fortitude than any one, calmly observing when the news was brought to him, "Well ! if it be the will of Heaven that I am not to reign,—I can submit without murmuring."—Few, however, had this measure of patience. The officer who brought him the mortifying intelligence took to his bed, with illness caused by pure vexation, and was not able to leave it for a week. Every one seemed lost in astonishment that the surprise could have occurred ; and, strangest of all, nobody knew that the British ships, launches, sailors, and marines, were the principal parties engaged ! Villarreal drew out his report of the battle (*vide Appendix C*), without the slightest mention of it, though the fact was so important in

extenuation of his failure,—and on the 29th December he tendered his resignation. A council was held, and finally the command-in-chief was conferred on the Infante Don Sebastian. Moreno was named Chief of the Staff; Villarreal, first Ayudante, and Brigadier General Don Joaquin Elio, Private Secretary. His Highness set out next day for Galdacano, and took command of the army.

The Carlist troops had within the previous fortnight received an instalment of pay of half a month: on the 3rd January Don Sebastian disbursed another half-month's pay to all—both forming a small part only of what was then due to the troops, but which the poor fellows received thankfully, and enjoyed with a zest proportioned to the well-known deficiencies of the Carlist Exchequer, and the extent of their late privations.—However, the want of a better organization was universally felt to be indispensable, previous to any extensive and effective operations, and the Infante wisely gave his whole attention to the task—by no means an easy one—as the fact is, that the majority of the Carlist leaders have hitherto chiefly relied on the spirit and devotion of their troops, and looked upon discipline as a point of comparatively trifling importance.

The winter had by this time made itself felt with a severity that seemed to forbid all effort at moun-

tain warfare. The snow lay steadily on hill and valley for the first time since 1830; and as every thing portended a cheerless military pause, enlivened only by the everlasting gasconnades of Evans and Espartero, I prepared for my return, and joined a party of six, all English, who had happened to meet at the siege, and were now on their way to Irun. Amongst these was Lord Ranelagh, proceeding to winter at Rome, bearing with him the well-won cross and ribbon of the second class of San Fernando, the especial thanks of Don Carlos and the Infante,—and (what perhaps may be prized still higher, as a distinction to which few foreigners have attained in this contest<sup>1</sup>)—the public testimony borne by his General to his bravery and merit in the field, throughout the trying period of the November and December operations before

<sup>1</sup> One of these brave and fortunate few, is Captain Henningsen, whose interesting "Twelvemonths' Campaign with Zumalacarre" does justice to the merits of every one but himself. It ought, however, to be known, that after the brilliant affair of Segura, on the 3rd of January, 1835, Zumalacarre harangued his victorious troops, and, expressed his high admiration of the gallant conduct of the *Lancero* Henningsen,—(then a volunteer in his guards; )—and hung round his neck a cross of St. Ferdinand, taken in the action;—the only instance I could hear of his decorating any one upon the field of battle. Henningsen's exploits in a hundred affairs, unmentioned by himself, were the theme of all who had served with him. His frontispiece portrait of Zumalacarre is accounted in the provinces the best extant.



Bilbao, during the entire of which he acted under Eguia's own eye.

We left Durango on the 9th of January, 1837, and proceeded through Ermua, Elgoibar, Ascoytia, Aspetia, Tolosa and Hernani, to Irun. At this point, Lord Ranelagh, Mr. Humphreys, Surgeon Burgess and I, crossed to Behobie, and after receiving from the police authorities the *attentions* ordinarily paid to those whose passports are not *en regle*, we arrived safely in Bayonne on the 13th. We here found that during our progress an important event had taken place,—a change of ministry at Cuartel Real which promised to be productive of considerable advantage to Don Carlos in the progress of the gallant struggle he is making for the preservation of his rights, against the combined strength of English, French, and Spanish foes.

The laborious and heavily-responsible office of Universal Minister was abolished at the repeated request of Señor Erro himself, who found it impossible to get through the mass of important business that continually pressed upon him; and a regular ministry of four individuals had been organised instead; two of the functionaries being appointed *ad interim*, that not a moment's delay might prevent the adoption of a better system. In effecting this very material alteration Don Carlos addresses Señor Erro as follows :—

"Durango, Jan 10.

"Taking into consideration the reiterated applications which have been made to me to relieve you from the functions of my office of Universal Minister, which you have filled to my great satisfaction, I have resolved to accede to your request, and relieve you from this employment; reserving to you as a reward for your fidelity, your zeal, and your merit, your former place in my council of state. I have decided at the same time, and above all, to suppress the office of Universal Minister, which I created by my decree of the 20th of April last year; and that its several departments be confided to Secretaries of State, and of the Cabinet, which I have at the same time resolved to nominate to each."

(Signed by the King's hand.)

"To Don Juan Battista Erro."

"Durango, Jan. 10.

"Conformably to my Sovereign decree of this day, I name, viz. :—

"1. Secretary of State for the Department of Grace and Justice, and *President of the Council of Ministers*, the very Rev. Bishop of Leon (my present Counsellor of State).

"2. Secretary of State and of Finances, Don Pedro Alcantara Diaz de Labandero (at present

Honorary Minister of my supreme Council of War, and Intendant of the Army).

"3. Secretary of State, *ad interim*, for the War Department, Major-General Don Manuel Maria de Medina, Verdes y Cabañas (at present Sub-Inspector-General of infantry).

"4. Secretary of State and Foreign affairs *ad interim* Don Wenceslos Maria de Sierra (at present first officer of that department)."

(Signed by the royal hand.)

"To Don J. B. Erro."

Independently of the beneficial alteration of system which the above decrees enforce, the individual appointments all indicate a change for the better. The first named is already so well known in England that little remains to be said, except that I found him as highly esteemed by all the enlightened and respectable portion of the Carlist inhabitants of the Basque provinces, as he is at our side of the water. He is a decided friend to a general amnesty, as a truly christian means of terminating this unhappy civil strife; being well aware how very much the extreme dread of an opposite course of proceeding on the part of the Carlists, has worked to defeat the progress of the King to Madrid. Whilst in the camp before Bilbao lately, I had an opportunity of observing

how a similar fear in operation amongst its Urbanos tended to retard the triumphal entry of Don Carlos. The deserters from it declared that every man expected to be shot if the Carlists forced an entry; attributing most savage intentions to Don Carlos, Eguia, and the Bishop of Leon—three of the most benevolent men, perhaps in Europe; and from my own observation, I should say all perhaps *too* kind-hearted to execute justice and exercise authority as sternly as it is requisite it should be, in such a country as Spain. But such are the erroneous opinions that obtain credence in civil war. A great practical advantage of this appointment—a President of the Council, is, that ministers can now proceed to business without waiting for the presence of the King.

Labandero is also a lover of amity and mercy, a particular friend of the Bishop of Leon, and every way calculated to work well with him in the administration of his most important department. He is a practical and enlightened man of mature age, who has had considerable experience in the time of Ferdinand, as Intendant of Catalonia; and is very popular in the provinces.

Cabañas commenced his career as a leader of guerillas in the war of independence, and rose to the rank of Mariscal de Campo under Ferdinand. He is upwards of sixty, has seen service, and is, or

rather was, a rich proprietor in Andalusia; but it remains to be seen into whose hands the proprietorship will settle.

Sierra is the youngest, the most active and the most thorough man of business of the four. He was trained in the office of the Foreign Department of Madrid, and has been engaged in similar affairs in the provinces ever since the arrival of the King. He was appointed first Secretary to Cruz Mayor,—was Secretary of Embassy to the Duke of San Carlos at Paris,—and has been virtually occupied as Under-Secretary of State by Erro. The other appointments are changes, but Señor Sierra's is a well deserved promotion. He speaks English fluently,—is as ready and punctual as an Englishman in engagements, and despatch of business,—(rare virtues in Spain, where "to morrow" is the order of the day,)—and has become an universal favourite with both natives and foreigners, by his obliging and enlightened methods of transacting the affairs of his office, of which everybody feels the benefit.

Considerable changes for the better in military matters were also taking place as we left the provinces, and the renewed hope and confidence which they inspired, were equal to a victory. So far from dreading an attack, the Carlists were even then intent on carrying the war into Castille, and

already making very effective arrangements to become assailants as speedily as the weather would permit. One of the most politic preparatory measures was the order issued by Don Sebastian, that all individuals incorporated in the different battalions of the provinces of Guipuscoa, Alava, Biscay and Navarre, who were not natives, should be formed into corps according to their country, preparatory to their march forward. All who know the extent to which the Spaniards carry their feelings of nationality, and the points of superiority in which each kingdom or province of the Peninsula claims to take precedence, will admit that a more judicious arrangement could not have been made for the removal of petty jealousies, the prevention of bad companionship, the creation of a generous emulation, and the establishment of that confidence which is a sure forerunner of success, by the banding together of friends, kindred and countrymen, "shoulder to shoulder," in the hour of danger. A friend, who was present at the first review of the new battalion of the Grenadiers of Castille, between 800 and 900 strong,—each man of whom had been a Grenadier in the Royal Christino Grenadiers—assured me that he believes them to be the most effective body of troops in Spain.

The army of Don Carlos indeed, underwent a very useful remodelling, under the surveillance

of Don Sebastian, who wisely looked to the organization of his forces before he undertook anything serious. He felt by experience the importance of good arrangements, and, I am confident, made great exertions to compass them. The official Aides-de-Camp of his Royal Highness by the new appointment, besides Lieutenant-General Don Bruno de Villarreal, late Commander-in-Chief, were Lieut.-General Count da Madeira, a Portuguese, who had served under Lord Beresford's orders throughout the Duke of Wellington's campaigns in the peninsula,—afterwards commanded in Don Miguel's service, and was highly esteemed for military talent;—Don Ignacio Cuevillas, Mariscal de Campo, formerly Governor of Saragossa;—Don Pablo Sanz, who led the expedition into the Asturias;—Colonel Count de Mortara, Chamberlain to the Duke of Lucca, and who distinguished himself so much before the gates of San Agustin in retaking a piece of cannon abandoned to the enemy at a critical moment;—Colonel Don Francisco Merry, *Gentilhomme de chambre* to Don Sebastian, whom he had the honour of conducting into the provinces, and who formerly commanded the English Legion. Don Joaquin Elio, Brigadier-General and late Chief of the Staff of Don Pablo Sanz during the Asturian expedition, was appointed military Secretary.

The Adjutant-Generals of the Staff, (at the head of which was Lieutenant-General Don Vincente Gonzales Moreno), were Brigadier-Generals Don Carlos Vargas and Don Antonio Urbiztondo, formerly Chief of Villarreal's Staff, and a man of considerable tact in matters of discipline and organization; Colonels Don Juan Albelda, Don Ferd. Cabañas (son of the new Minister), Don Francisco H. de Cisners, Don Gabriel de Lacy (formerly of the Royal Guard and placed on the Staff of Zumalacarreghi at the commencement of the war), Don Luis Puente of the Artillery, Don Antonio Arjona (a cavalry officer, possessing a high character for valour and ability) and Don José Cabafias, (also a son of the Minister.)

The first Ayudantes of the Staff were Colonels Don Elias Giron, Don Pedro Orue, Don Gabriel Gonzalez Zabala, Don Manuel Toledo, Don Antonio Campo, Don Manuel Mozo Rosales, Don José Gordillo, Don Bartolome Benavides, Don Julian Juan Pabea, and Don Ramon Vial.

The second Ayudantes of the Staff were Lieutenant-Colonel Don Roque Linares; Majors Don José M. de Sierra, Don Antonio Orue, Don José M. de Lasala, Don Fernando Tegeiro, Don Cipriano Fulgosio, one of the twenty-seven officers exiled to Porto Rico, who happily escaped on his arrival there, and who speaks English excellently;



Don Fernando Gonzalez del Campillo, and Don Alfonso de Barrez, a French officer of distinguished bravery, much esteemed by Zumalacarre-gui; Captains Don Antonio Ortega, Don José Fortuni, Don Roberto Roth, (a German attached to the Engineers, and a draftsman of peculiar talent), Don Enrique O'Donnel, and Don Ignacio Mazarasa; Lieutenants Don Fernando Arce and Don José Fulgosio; Ensigns Don Joachin V. Olazabal, Don Pedro F. de la Barga, and Don José Barros.

These officers were distributed amongst the various Staffs of the divisions of the Basque provinces and Navarre for the more complete establishment of discipline, under the improved system which the Infante was bringing about; and nothing was left undone to ensure the accomplishment of a very superior plan, with which the King or the Prince might safely take the field in the open plains that lie between Durango and Madrid.

A number of experienced officers and brave soldiers were taken prisoners in various engagements with the Queen's superior forces in 1836, whose assistance was most desirable; and fortunately, in the nick of time, (on the 15th January) Espartero sent a *Parlementario* to the Prince at Zornosa, to propose an exchange and restoration. It was immediately accepted, and 300 Christino officers and

privates, found in the depots of Atoun, Lascano, Marquina, Munguia, &c. were released. The English Brigadier Flinter, taken with Brigadier Puente and the Deputy Beltran de Lya, at Almaden by Gomez, were set free on one side;—Trovo, Peseto, Baron Plessin, &c. on the other.

Before leaving the frontier we found that the *levée en masse* decreed by the Juntas of the Basque provinces, was proceeding with a degree of spirit that promised most favourably. It was a favourite project of Eguia, and had been partially commenced under his auspices in May, 1836; but, on his removal from office, a complete change of system occurred in the War Department; and it was not till Don Sebastian had taken the direction of affairs, (unfettered by previous arrangements or personal considerations,) that this excellent measure was afforded an opportunity of developing the patriotic resources of the Basques. This force is not destined for active mobile service, but to undertake, as a local militia or national guard (or, more properly, a *Landsturm*), the defence of the province or *merindal* in which it is raised. The population, young and old, we were assured, were coming forward with promptitude and cheerfulness; for they perfectly understood the justice and utility of the measure, and the benefits that must arise to their country from it. They knew they could depend on

themselves, and they thought nothing of the sacrifice of time or money requisite to complete their individual equipment, and combined organization. I say, young and old, for the fact was that (except in the towns) there was scarcely a middle-aged man to be seen unarmed. Nearly all the *paysanos*, able to bear arms, were already engaged, either in the regular battalions, or as volunteers placed on the list for enrolment in active service. The new measure, which extended to all between the ages of eighteen and fifty, was therefore chiefly intended to afford the inhabitants of towns and the commercial population an opportunity of falling in, and contributing to the general defence, in the way best suited to their taste, and compatible with their occupations.

In all the above mentioned appointments and arrangements, the name of Gomez is not included. Shortly after we left Durango his conduct was made the subject of a Commission of Inquiry, of which the world has not yet heard the results. As few are aware of the nature of the charges brought against him, I subjoin the following enumeration, to which I can add nothing useful in the way of commentary, having no guarantee for the truth of the hundred rumours which came to my ears respecting them. His chief accuser is Cabrera.

“1. For disobeying his orders—which were, to

have taken up a position in the Asturias, for the purpose of aiding and preparing a movement beyond the Ebro, and for having extended the war to provinces removed from co-operation with the grand army.

“2. For having compromised Cabrera, Quilez, and other officers of Don Carlos, by inducing them to uncover the provinces of Catalonia and Valencia; the consequence of which has been that the Christians recovered much of their lost influence in those quarters, and were enabled to get possession of Cantavieja.

“3. For having given protection to many acknowledged rebels and avowed enemies to the cause of Don Carlos.

“4. For having plundered the inhabitants of the several provinces through which he passed, of large sums of money in the shape of contributions, without accounting with the commissioner who accompanied him from the Royal head-quarters, and without having brought to the King any considerable part of the said treasure.

“5. For having fled in a cowardly manner from the city of Cordova with 10,000 men, at the approach of Alaix with only 4,000, after having been enthusiastically received by the inhabitants.

“6. For having refused to engage the enemy in various places, though often superior to them in

force, and though repeatedly desired to do so by Cabrera, Villalobos, and other officers.

“7. For having in particular refused to fight with the Queen’s General Alaix, though all the advantages of position and numbers were on his side.

“8. For neglecting to establish a provisional government for Don Carlos in several places where the loyalty of the people was undoubted.

“9. For having abandoned several places where the name of the King was proclaimed, much to the prejudice of the royal cause, and to the injury of his faithful friends.

“10. For having by such conduct lost the lives of many distinguished individuals who have since been laid hold of and executed by the Queen’s party.

“11. And finally, for having returned to the Basque provinces with his troops in a state of insubordination.”

Whilst the conduct of this celebrated man is yet under discussion, and the political world hesitates whether to pronounce him a hero or a traitor, the following letter will be perused with interest.

“Guernica, Jan. 30, 1837,

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have remained silent for a long time, notwithstanding all that has been said out of Spain, for and against me as a commander-

in-chief of the expedition destined for the interior of the kingdom. The King, my beloved master, has deigned to order that an investigation be made into the manner in which I conducted that expedition; I feel satisfied the result cannot be otherwise than favourable, and shall with patience wait the decision of my judges. But a member of the French cabinet having, in the Chamber of Deputies, put forth as an argument that my return to the provinces was a proof of the little sympathy the cause of my sovereign met with in the interior of the kingdom, I feel called upon to break through my projected reserve, and to offer a few remarks on the motives which induced me to return.

“It is well known, and our enemies have acknowledged many times, that owing to my first operations in Andalusia, the government of Madrid was placed between two dangers equally redoubtable—the one, the rising of the south of the Peninsula in favour of Charles the Fifth—the other, the loss of the capital, should the royalist army on the banks of the Ebro advance. Without a sufficient force to offer an effectual resistance, the revolutionary government remained for several days in a state of stupor, not knowing how to act; but a great part of the Carlist army, having marched to the siege of Bilbao, and the fall of that city not appearing so imminent as the rising of Andalusia,

the government judged, and that rightly, the moment opportune for sending against me all the disposable forces that it could collect from Burgos to Cadiz. This circumstance compelled me to change my position in the south of the Peninsula; but it is a fact, that I could have maintained myself there with advantage, if it had not been for the refuge scandalously granted to the column of General Ordoñez, on the English territory, the 21st November, at the moment my victorious troops were driving them in disorder before them,—and for the attack by the English men-of-war next day, on my first division, whilst in passing to Algesira it crossed the sands of Gibraltar. Although it may be said that, from those circumstances, my return to this province was not solely for the purpose of making my sovereign acquainted with the favourable disposition of the whole of Spain, yet it must be acknowledged that causes, not permanent and irremediable, controlled my actions, it being obvious that they were influenced by accidents which at a future period it would be easy to avoid.

“Now, as to the feeling of the people in favour of the royal cause:—it appears to me impossible that it can longer for a moment be doubted, when it is taken into consideration, the facility with which I traversed the kingdom with only 2,700 infantry, and 160 cavalry, the whole of the force

with which I left the provinces of the north. I have occupied the most populous cities, and have kept the government of Madrid in the greatest state of agitation for nearly six months, although pursued constantly by different bodies of troops more numerous than that which I commanded.

“What could be more flattering to me, than to find that this phenomenon was explained, by attributing to me extraordinary talents? But I am not so blinded by self-love, as not to see that this praise was a trick of the Liberals to turn attention from the real and only conclusion that ought to be drawn from the history of my expedition, which is indeed a romance—a wonder to all those who judge after the rules of strategy. No; it was neither my genius which facilitated my marches so happily, or the want of activity or talent of my enemies. The success is due to the intervention of the people in my favour—to that officious bounty which provides for the wants of a friend, and hastens to offer it ere it be asked; the enemy, on the contrary, were refused everything, and only obtained necessities by force.

“There were many places which proclaimed Carlos V. on learning that we were within some leagues; at other towns I was compelled to entreat, to supplicate, that the people would not give way so publicly to an enthusiasm which, a few hours after-



## CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER the first fit of vexation and despondency had passed away, the loss of Bilbao soon became productive of the very opposite effects on the Carlists. Hope, activity, the desire of retrieving lost credit, and of profiting by experience, seemed to inspire every one. The troops burned to avenge their defeat, and received the Infante with enthusiasm as an earnest of the increased personal interest which would henceforth be imparted to the struggle. It really seemed as if the reverses they had suffered were necessary to call forth the increased energy, unity and devotion essential to success. The following was the

PROCLAMATION OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE  
INFANTE DON SEBASTIAN GABRIEL TO THE  
ARMY, ON TAKING THE COMMAND-IN-CHIEF.

“Soldiers—The King, my beloved uncle, whose sole considerations are for your welfare, has conferred on me the command of the army. It is not for your General to judge the resolutions of his sovereign, but to prove that he has given you for a chief, a

comrade disposed to share in all your labours and fatigues. I have often witnessed your exploits. You will yourselves have an opportunity of witnessing my zeal for your welfare, and my efforts to terminate a war in which you are already covered with glory. Observe how your country contemplates your actions. Spain groans beneath the yoke of that atrocious, usurping, and anarchical faction which devours the prosperity of the country, tortures its victims, and by its impious acts, wearies the patience of Almighty Providence.

“Soldiers ! for you is reserved the glory of plunging this faction into the abyss from which it has risen. You have before saved Europe—you will save her again. You are the defenders pre-destined to preserve the throne and to secure order, by showing to the world what a handful of men can effect, and by exposing the intrigues of a vile ambition, entrenched behind the ægis of treaties. Never has a more glorious undertaking been reserved for the brave ! Confide in the justice of your cause ! The God of armies will protect that glorious mission which you have already honoured by your courage and dignified by your sufferings. A few more efforts, and victory, my brave friends, will infallibly crown your labours.

“The Infante DON SEBASTIAN GABRIEL.”

“Head Quarters, Galdacano, Dec. 30.”

It was confidently asserted by the Christinos in Bayonne and San Sebastian, that every opposition would be made to the new military measures,—that the nomination of the Infante Don Sebastian to the chief command of the army was not a popular measure;—that the march across the Ebro would not be supported; also that the juntas were opposed to the new ministry, and had hesitated in furnishing the army with men and rations. The following addresses presented to the Infante from the Junta and the army of Navarre clears up the point:—

FROM THE JUNTA OF NAVARRE TO HIS SERENE HIGHNESS THE INFANTE DON SEBASTIAN GABRIEL.

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,—By a royal decree, dated the 29th of December last, and which has been communicated to this royal Junta, we have been informed that the King—whom God protect—the beloved uncle of your Highness, has conferred on you the command-in-chief of his armies.

“The Junta is not able to express to you, Sir, the satisfaction it feels at a nomination which will form a memorable epoch in our history. You put yourself at the head of an army of warriors, at a moment when the inclemency of the season has dragged from its hands a glorious triumph—perhaps decisive. Your Highness is destined to lead our army to victory, and to consolidate on a firm footing military and religious discipline. You will show t

the presumptuous of the present century the real worth of high birth, and how far above base and ignoble acts are the princes of royal blood. The religious, military and political conduct of your Highness will prove to usurpation and to anarchy what can be accomplished by a prince, the first subject of his King, at the head of a few brave soldiers who are prodigal of their blood in defending the altar and the throne.

"The Junta of Navarre will do everything in its power to execute fully the order of our beloved monarch, manifested by the nomination of your highness as Commander-in-chief of his brave and loyal soldiers. The Junta puts itself at the disposal of your Highness, praying that the God of arms may lead you from victory to victory, until impiety be exterminated, the consolidation of the Spanish throne secured, and our virtuous and beloved monarch firmly wielding the sceptre of Recaredo and Fernando.

"God protect your Royal Highness many years.

"MIGUEL MODEL—JOAQUIN MARTCHALAR  
BENITO DIAZ DEL RIO—JUAN CRISOSTOMO  
DE VEDAONDO Y MENDENUITA—JOSE BENITO MORENO—NICHOLAS MARIA IRIVAS  
Y NAVAR—MANUEL MARIA VICUNA,

"The Royal Governing Junta of Navarre."

"Estella, January 9."

FROM THE ARMY OF NAVARRE TO THE SAME.

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS,—  
The allocation which your Highness deigned to address to the army on the 30th of December last, on taking the command in chief of the army, confided to you by the King, your well-beloved uncle,—has produced in the hearts of all Navarrese that enthusiasm which those who know their character alone can appreciate; and if, up to the present moment, obeying their chiefs, they have observed a discipline of which history offers few examples, their valour and firmness henceforth will be doubly stimulated by the honour shown to them by your Highness, in giving for them a leader the descendant of San Fernando and San Louis, endowed and distinguished for such rare qualities. Full of pride and ardour, the Navarrese will hurl into the gulph the monster who destroys property, devours man, and raises his impious hands against the Most High.

“Sir, *to whatever point the Navarrese may be required to march, they will be found by your side, requiring not the signal of the white feather of Henry the Fourth. The Navarrese know your Highness; they will accompany you always and everywhere, and their swords will form a circle round you in the hour of danger.*

“Receive, Sir, with that amiable kindness for which you are so much distinguished, this simple effusion, the language of the hearts of your soldiers, who perform more than they promise.

“God protect your Highness many years.

“JUAN ANTONIO ZARATIEIGUI,

“Second Commander General of Navarre.”

“Head-quarters, Aberin, Jan. 14”

Similar addresses were presented to the Infante from every division in the army, and from the Juntas of Biscay, Guipuscoa, and Alava.

These assurances of loyal zeal, and a determination to risk every thing in the endeavour to carry Don Carlos triumphant to Madrid, consolidated the authority of Don Sebastian beyond all further hope of his internal or external enemies to disturb. It had been long and loudly declared by the *Christino* press, “The Navarrese will not cross the Ebro!” Their address on the instant, and their deeds in the fulness of time (10th of July 1837), have silenced their calumniators for ever.

The improved arrangements preparatory to the contemplated expedition now made rapid progress. In the beginning of January, the following new organization of the infantry received the approbation of Don Carlos:—

## FIRST DIVISION—NAVARRE.

Under the orders of Major-General Don José Antonio Goñi, to be composed of two brigades.

1st brigade, commanded by Brigadier Don Tomas Tarragual, and composed of the 1st, 2d, and 3d battalions.

2d brigade, commanded by Brigadier Don Juan Bernardo Zubiri, composed of the 5th, 6th, and 7th battalions.

## SECOND DIVISION—NAVARRE.

Under the orders of the commandant-general of that kingdom, the Major-General Don Francisco Garcia, and composed of two brigades.

1st brigade, commanded by Brigadier Don Fermin Repalda, and composed of the 8th and 9th battalions and Guides of Navarre.

2d brigade, to be commanded by the senior officer until a general be named, and composed of the 10th, 11th, and 12th battalions.

## THIRD DIVISION—GUIPUSCOA.

Under the orders of the commandant of the province, Major-General Don Bartolomé Giubalde, to be composed of three brigades.

1st brigade, commanded by Colonel Don Joaquin Julian Alzaa, and composed of the 1st, 3d, and 5th battalions.

2d brigade, commanded by Colonel Don Bernardo Yturizza, and composed of the 2d, 4th, and 6th battalions.

3d brigade, commanded by Colonel Don José Ignacio Yturbe, and composed of the 7th and 8th battalions.

#### FOURTH DIVISION—ALAVA.

Under the orders of Brigadier Don Prudencio Sopelana, to be composed of two brigades.

1st brigade, commanded by Colonel Don Camilo Moreno, and composed of 1st and 5th battalions and guides of Alava.

2d brigade, commanded by Colonel Don Feliciano Elguea, and composed of the 2d, 3d, and 4th battalions.

#### FIFTH DIVISION—BISCAY.

Under the orders of the commandant-general of the province, Brigadier Don Juan Manuel Sarasa, and to be composed of three brigades.

1st brigade, commanded by Colonel Don Juan Antonio Goñi, and composed of the 2d, 3d, and 5th battalions.

2d brigade, commanded by Colonel Don Juan Antonio Berastegui, and composed of the 1st, 4th, and 6th battalions.

3d brigade, commanded by Brigadier Don Cas-



tor Andechaga, and composed of the 7th, 8th, and 9th battalions.

#### SIXTH DIVISION—CASTILLE.

Under the orders of Brigadier Don Antonio Urbiztondo, to be composed of two brigades, commanded by Brigadiers Don Carlos Perez de las Vacas and Don José Arroyo. This division is composed of seven battalions, the whole of the men of which have either passed over from the enemy, or have been made prisoners. It is intended to give each of these battalions a particular name, as was usual in former times. The first battalion, composed solely of men passed over from the Royal Guards, has been named "*Granaderos del Ejercito.*"

#### BRIGADE OF ARRAGON AND VALENCIA.

Under the orders of Brigadier Don Joaquin Quilez, and composed of one battalion of Arragon, called "Del Infante Don Juan;" second battalion of Arragon, called "Del Infante Don Sebastian;" and one battalion of Valencians, called "Del Infante Don Fernando."

#### BATTALION OF ALGERINES.

Under the orders of Colonel Crevinkell, composed of deserters from the French auxiliary Legion.

TOTAL OF THE INFANTRY OF THE ARMY OF THE  
NORTH.

Navarrese . . . . .	12 battalions.
Guipuscoa . . . . .	8 „
Alava . . . . .	6 „
Biscay . . . . .	9 „
Castille . . . . .	7 „
Arragon and Valencia .	3 „
Algerines . . . . .	1 „

In all . . . 46

The effective of each battalion is to be, without delay, carried to 1,000 men.

All the officers' servants are to join their regiments, and invalids to be given to officers in their places.

The following officers have been appointed as second Commandantes of provinces:—

Brigadier Don Juan Antonio Zaratiegui, for Navarre.

Brigadier Don Pedro Iturriza, for Guipuscoa.

Brigadier Don Juan Antonio Guerguè, for Biscay; and

Brigadier Don Valentin Berastegui, for Alava.

The organization of the cavalry, (composed of nearly 2,000 horses,) was also in progress at the same time.

The battalion of Algerines was composed of

eight companies of well-disciplined men. The desertion from the French auxiliary Legion, and its loss on the field of battle, was immense since its entry into Spain. On its landing in Catalonia it was 7,000 strong; in the month of September, 1836, it was reinforced by 800 men from France; and at the beginning of January, 1837, its effective force was 2,500 men, with 500 in the hospitals. The treatment the legion experienced from the Christino government was infamous; it was left for some time without clothing, money, or even rations; and now, after two years' hard fighting, and the serious remonstrances of the French government, Mendizabal *has promised* it 30,000 dollars! Is it any wonder that the men desert and join the Carlist Legion, which is well fed and protected by the inhabitants?

On the 9th of January, thirty-one Algerines stationed at Olaque deserted in a body from their battalions and presented themselves to the Carlist Commandant-general of Navarre, and were embodied amongst their comrades in the new Foreign Legion assembled at Zornosa. Since that period desertion has gone on by wholesale. On the 28th January, fifty men passed at once into France, and the most recent speculations of the Parisian Christino press regard the Legion as virtually extinct.

As it was also known that amongst the Por-

tuguese Army of Observation were many individuals well affected to Don Carlos, who would, if opportunity afforded, again gladly follow the Count da Madeira to victory,—the King published the following decree, which I understand has already been productive of the secession of several officers and men from that Legion.

ROYAL DECREE.

“Persuaded, that by violence only, many of the soldiers composing the Portuguese Legion were dragged from their country and marched into Spain, to swell the ranks of the usurpation, and under the pretence of defending the rights of my niece, lend aid to the most cruel—the most devastating anarchy.

“I have thought the moment arrived for providing in my army to all faithful Portuguese, that tranquillity of mind which they lost the day they leagued themselves with revolution.

“I have, therefore, ordered,

“That all chiefs, officers, serjeants, corporals, and privates belonging to the said Portuguese Legion, who shall pass over to the ranks of the brave defenders of my just cause, do receive promotion equivalent to the force they may bring with them.

“All those who pass without followers shall preserve the rank they previously enjoyed.

"You will take the necessary measures for the due execution of the decree, ordering all chiefs and authorities to pay that attention to the strangers they so justly merit; and that all Alcaldes of towns and villages, give them protection and succour, should it be required.

"I, THE KING."

"Royal head-quarters, Andoain, Feb. 11, 1837."

"To General Don Manuel Maria de Medina, Verdes y Cabañas,  
Minister-of-War, *ad interim*."

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It was not until the 24th February that the War Office could find time to decide on the respective merits of the assailants of the Convent of San Mamès. Lord Ranelagh, satisfied with the public testimony of Eguia, and the cross already conceded to him for daily and hourly services amongst all varieties of danger in field and battery,—had left the snow-covered provinces for the winter; and did not interfere with the claims of the native *Señores oficiales*.

Now I recollect—his Lordship's name was not even mentioned in the report of the affair drawn up by Lieut.-Colonel Nigueruela, of the first of Castille, for presentation to the General:—for which the said Lieutenant-Colonel volunteered an apology to his Lordship half an hour too late—as

suring him that he would have inserted it, had he known how to spell it !—at which Lord Ranelagh laughed so heartily, that the Castillian was *almost* put out of countenance.

But to resume : the honour of first entering San Mamès, was awarded to Don Santos Fernandez Pintado, Major of the 2d battalion of Castille, (the survivor of three officers who entered the fossé) who thereupon received the order of the 2nd class of San Fernando.

Whilst the Carlists were thus awarding honours and organizing battalions for the renewal of the war in a superior style, the Christino Generals were employed after another fashion, according to their characteristic necessities. The following morceau, published in the *Madrid Gazette* in June last, illustrates the degree of discipline to which the Christino Army had attained, far more satisfactorily than any extraneous commentary of mine:—

#### “ MILITARY DISCIPLINE.

“ The general-in-chief of the army of the centre has published in an order of the day, the following dispositions, with the intention of terminating those disorders too frequent in the battles, and of which the consequences may be fatal.

“ Art 1. Every time that a brigade or a battalion commences firing, the Commandant-General of the

division, or, in his absence, the superior Officer, shall place in the rear half a company of artillery, and a piquet of cavalry, with orders to shoot any soldier, who, without being wounded, or furnished with competent authority for so doing, shall quit the field of battle.

"2. The Officers of any company which a soldier shall have abandoned, shall be suspended from their rank, and sent prisoners to some fortress, until they have proved that they took all necessary measures, and done all which depended upon them to keep the man at his post.

"3. The Commandants of battalions or Chiefs of troops, who shall be dispersed, or fly coward-like at sight of, or under the fire of the enemy, at the moment when they come into action, shall be instantly suspended from their rank, and incur the penalties decreed against them by a council of war which shall be held within twenty-four hours.

"4. During the battle, the most profound silence shall be observed. It is forbidden to cry, 'Forward, cavalry!' or to make any other cry which might disturb the good order which ought always, and particularly during a battle, to reign in the ranks. The man who makes any cry shall be punished as the competent officers may judge proper. The penalty of death may be applied to those who may have cried—'We are cut to pieces!—lost!—treason!' or any

other cries which may create disorder and cause the position to be abandoned. The Chiefs of battalions and Officers of companies who shall have heard or permitted a cry, shall be suspended from their rank.

"5. Conformably to the plan already established in the army of the north, and according to the temporary regulations here made, there shall be a company formed to carry away and take care of the wounded in each brigade; in consequence, no other individual is allowed to quit the ranks. This abuse having been tolerated until now, the third part of the disposable force has been sometimes lost in the midst of a battle. Every soldier who infringes on the present order shall be instantly shot, unless he returns to his ranks, on being ordered to do so by his Officer.

"6. As the ordonnance forbids firing without the orders of the Chiefs, they and the Officers of the corps will employ the greatest energy to avoid the accidents occasioned by useless shots. They will economise the munitions as much as possible, and will only permit batteries and entire companies to engage with the guerillas or isolated men, and never but within musket shot. These abuses discourage the troops, who uselessly consume their cartridges, which they ought to preserve for more decisive occasions.



“7. The Commandants, Generals of divisions, and Chiefs of brigades are responsible for the execution of the present dispositions, which shall be inserted in the order of the day of the army, and read before going into battle.

“CASTELLANO.”

Whilst on the subject of the publications in the *Madrid Gazette*, I may be allowed to call the attention of the reader to some singular statistical results established therein relative to the conduct of the present civil war in Spain.

According to the official statements published in the *Gazette*, the number of Carlists killed in the field of battle up to the 1st of April, 1836, is ..... 280,535  
 From the 1st April to 8th October 1836..... 33,927  
 Carlist prisoners to 1st April 1836 ..... 54,493  
 Ditto to 8th October 1836..... 11,760

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Total of Carlists killed and prisoners ..... 380,715  
 Muskets taken during the above periods, 113,221; battles gained, 597, which are further divided into 327 partial affairs, and 270 total routs.

This amusing foreign account may however be fairly balanced by a very serious domestic one, in which unfortunately there is no exaggeration. All is liberality and loss—waste and want. Lord

Palmerston will probably term our aid a charitable one. If "charity covereth a multitude of sins," his Lordship has cleared off a long arrear of trespasses against the honour and independence of his own country, by his unbounded benevolence to the Queen of Spain, viz :—

RETURN to an Address to his Majesty, dated Feb. 7, 1837, for a Return of the Amount of Military and Naval Stores, Arms, and Ammunition, furnished to the Queen of Spain, under the stipulations of the Quadripartite Treaty, and the Amount of Payment received for the same, by his Majesty's Government.

A Return of the Amount of Military and Naval Stores, Arms, and Ammunition, furnished by the Ordnance Department to the Queen of Spain, under the stipulations of the Quadripartite Treaty, and the Amount of Payment received for the same by his Majesty's Government.

FURNISHED TO THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT.

318,600 muskets, 10,000 carbines, 3,600 pistols, 10,000 swords, 4,000 rifles, 4,000,000 small arm cartridges, 19,856 cannon ditto, 938,531 lbs. powder, 35,209 chests and barrels.

## 166 ARGUMENTS FOR CARRYING OUT THE

16 iron guns, 12 iron mortars, 18 travelling, 10 garrison, and 12 ammunition carriages, 14,892 shot and shells, 19,320 fuzes.

Two bridges of pontoons, intrenching tools, &c.

One 18-pounder iron gun, six 18-pounder carronades, 30 muskets, 40 pistols, 40 swords, ammunition, shot, &c., for the schooner "Isabella."

Two 18-pounder iron guns, four 32-pounder carronades, 24 muskets, 24 pistols, 24 swords, ammunition, shot, &c., for the steam-ship "City of Edinburgh."

Six 32-pounder iron guns, 80 muskets, 40 pistols, 100 swords, 40 pikes, ammunition, shot, &c., for the steam-ship "Isabella II."

### FURNISHED TO THE AUXILIARY LEGION.

15,000 muskets, 1,200 carbines, 850 pistols, 1,000 swords, 600 rifles, 5,608,000 small arm cartridges, 22,023 cannon ditto, 13,018lbs. powder, 11,429 chests and barrels.

26 brass guns, two iron howitzers, 4,730 Congreve and 350 signal rockets, 18,487 fuzes, 13,942 shot and shells, 90 carriages for guns and rockets.

45 waggons and carts, 468 sets of harness; 15 tents, with bedsteads, bedding, hospital dresses, blankets, &c. &c.

Value of the above:—

Spanish Government . . . £468,878

Auxiliary Legion . . . 68,200

Total value . £537,078

No part of which has been received by the Ordnance Department.

By order of the Master-General and Board of Ordnance.

R. BYHAM, Sec.

Office of Ordnance, Feb. 17, 1837.

Return of all Military Medical Stores furnished to the Queen of Spain, under directions received from his Majesty's government.

Reference to the Secretary at War's Instructions for the Supplies.	Description of Supplies.	Value.	Dates of Deliveries of the Supplies to the Spanish Authorities.
<b>DATES.</b>		<b>£ s. d.</b>	
31 July, 1835	Surgical Instruments . . .	315 0 0	2 Sept., 1835.
8 Nov., 1836	Ditto ditto .	97 10 0	26 Nov., 1836.
3 Dec., 1836	Surgical Materials, &c. . .	159 12 6	13 Dec., 1836.
Total value, £572 2 6			

J. M'GRIGOR, Director-General.

Army Medical Department, Feb. 7, 1837.

A Return of the Amount of Naval Stores furnished to the Queen of Spain, under the stipulations of the Quadripartite Treaty, £969 15 0

168    DISBURSEMENT OF THE WINDOW TAX

Amount of Payment received for the  
same by his Majesty's Government .    Nil.

A Return of the Naval Slops and Provisions  
issued from any of his Majesty's Victualling  
Yards or Ships of War, for the use of the  
British Legion, or any other Forces serving  
her Majesty the Queen of Spain, and of the  
value thereof . . . . . £763 13 10

Amount received in whole, or in part,  
by his Majesty's Government for the  
same . . . . . Nil.

T. BRIGGS, Accountant-General.

R. DUNDAS, Storekeeper-General.

JAMES MEEK, Comptroller of Victualling.

Admiralty, Feb. 15, 1837.

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It would seem that, while the light of heaven is  
taxed to the people of England, for the purpose of  
meeting the exigences of the state, the government  
is rich enough to throw away half a million of  
money, to keep a dissolute woman on the throne  
of Spain. Of course payment is not looked for,  
nor can it ever be expected, as there are two con-

ventions now existing between Spain and this country—one of 1809, and the other of 1814—of which the former has never fulfilled her part—and in all probability never will.

The first item is composed of “318,600 muskets, 10,000 carbines, 3,600 pistols, 10,000 swords, 4,000 rifles, 4,000,000 small-arm cartridges, 19,856 cannon ditto, 938,531 lbs. powder, 35,209 chests and barrels.”—This is really the overflowing of good nature; for so abundantly have the Christinos been supplied with muskets, that they had enough to throw away in every engagement when they met the Carlists; and to arm, if not the whole, at least one-half of the insurgent army. On one occasion—the battle of the Amescuas—five thousand British muskets were picked up; and up to the 1st of January, 1836, it was calculated that about 57,000 stand of arms had changed hands. The truth is apparent; for every person who has visited the Carlist army, has found thousands of their muskets bearing the Tower mark; and it is a point of honour and pride with the Basque soldiers, to call the stranger’s attention to the fact, and tell him the fields on which they were so easily provided. This charity is, therefore, of an enlarged nature, and Lord Palmerston is entitled to the gratitude not only of friends, but foes. Had the supply to the Queen not been so overflowing, Don

## 172 BANKRUPT ACCOUNT: ERRORS EXCEPTED.

There is one article liberally furnished and liberally used, which I do not observe set down, namely, *cats* for the men's backs:—an omission which ought to be corrected. The cost of the above is—

For the Spanish Government . .	£468,878
Auxiliary Legion . . .	68,200
Total value . . . .	£537,078

To which may be subjoined the very candid addition of the Secretary at the Ordnance-office, "that no part" has been received by his department.

The return is then graced by an account of medical stores furnished to the expedition, to the extent of 572*l.* 2*s.*, of naval stores amounting to 969*l.* 15*s.*, and of slops and provisions, 763*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*; making the whole sum expended by the people of England for the services of Señora Muñoz, 539,383*l.* 11*s.* 4*d.*; for which, in the expressive word of the official paper, the return has been "*Nil!*" and for which to the day of judgment, in all human probability, the return will be, either in gratitude or in payment, "*Nil.*"

## CHAPTER IX.

THE sieges of Bilbao form such important portions of the history of the present civil war in Spain, that I feel confident my readers will excuse me for travelling out of the route I have hitherto pursued in my narrative; which has been, to state only what I saw and heard, or what those on whom I could personally rely, stated to me as facts which they had witnessed. However, civil war draws so decided a line of demarcation between its parties, that nobody can enjoy the opportunity of seeing what passes on both sides. I am, therefore, compelled to resort to others' aid for the completion of my sketch of the operations undertaken against Bilbao, and feel principally bound to acknowledge the assistance afforded me by the interesting letters written by the Correspondent of *The Morning Chronicle* before mentioned, who remained in Bilbao for some weeks after the siege had been raised. His valuable observations enable me to continue the nar-



rative, and afford my readers a view of the interior of Bilbao relieved:—a sight, from which it may well be believed that *I* was debarred,—though I had till then enjoyed a fine bird's eye view of it from the Alto de San Domingo.

According to the official return, the loss on the part of the Queen's army on the 24th and 25th of December, was 87 killed, 597 wounded, and 30 missing; in all, 714. It is generally understood that the Carlist loss was much greater. The number of prisoners taken from the latter is 135, including seven officers and the commandant of artillery.

The Carlists only admit a loss of 260 killed and wounded, and 65 taken prisoners: probably the remaining 70 were not soldiers but suspected civilians.

The *Oñate Gazette*, 3rd of Jan., states, that in the late hurricane a French vessel was seen off the port of Bermeo in distress. Several boats proceeded to her assistance in spite of the roughness of the sea, and succeeded in towing her in safety into the harbour. She proved to be a lugger bound from Caen to Bordeaux, laden with corn, linseed and oil. The captain demanded leave to unload his cargo, in order to repair the damage done to his vessel. Don Carlos not only gave his permission, but ordered every assistance to be given him, and added that he might suit his own convenience in leaving the port.

The *Morning Chronicle's* Correspondent says,

January 3rd—"To-day the *aldeanos* (villagers), have for the first time arrived in considerable numbers, driving into the town bullocks and hogs; and there is every prospect of a speedy return to the former supplies for the consumption of the place. Flour is more scarce than any other aliment, and bread is still very dear. Although the inhabitants endured great privations during the late siege, they could if necessary, have held out a month longer, or more perhaps. There was no dearth of rice, salt fish, *garbanzos* (chick-peas), scarlet beans, biscuit (of bad quality, however), salt pork, spirits, wine, charcoal, and there was an abundant supply of water. Those who could afford to pay for little comforts, such as raisins, wine, &c., &c., could get them, so that it was the poorer classes upon whom the state of siege bore the hardest as to nutriment. On the other hand females and children of all ranks suffered so much from fright, that they could hardly take needful sustenance, even if at their command.

"Let me not omit to mention that I find the vessel which some months back I informed you had been taken by the Carlists and carried into Bermeo was an American, not an English ship, as was supposed. She came from the Havannah with a cargo of tobacco and other colonial produce, which I now find was sold, and the duties regularly paid to the Faction's custom-house; in short, it is generally

understood that the vessel and cargo were destined for the Carlist market, and that there was a mercantile consignee to receive and dispose of the latter at Bermeo. The report of a British merchant vessel having been captured was artfully spread, with the double view of showing that Don Carlos had a naval force sufficient to capture British merchantmen on the high seas, and to serve as a screen for the introduction of supplies for the adherents of the Despot Carlos under the starry banner of the free American republic! But this is not all. A very short time back a *French* lugger appeared off Bermeo, apparently in distress: her masts were carried away, and she was towed into the small port of Bermeo in this seeming disabled condition. She was laden with provisions; and, to *prevent their being damaged* ('twas said), they were landed: offers for sale (the *nominal* sale) of the whole freight were promptly made; the duties, as was the case with the American vessel, being punctually disbursed. Thus Carlos V. obtained both revenue and supplies. But the most curious part of the story is, that this *disabled lugger had had a short passage direct from Bordeaux with an easterly wind and a smooth sea! and she came to a market prepared beforehand! the masts were broken purposely just before daylight, so as to account for the entrance of a vessel under the French flag into a port belonging to Don Carlos.* She

was in *distress* forsooth? I hear several other vessels are daily expected at Bermeo from France with a large supply of shoes for the Carlists.

"I understand that the American vessel has gone to St. Ubes for a cargo of salt, which she will most likely succeed in conveying to Bermeo, and make a good speculation, as the Carlists are in great want of that article. This is the season when the farmers and other house-keepers kill their pigs and salt down their pork for the whole consumption of the ensuing year: the usual time indeed for this operation was just about the commencement of the late siege. All communication with Bilbao (whence salt was obtained in former years by smuggling, notwithstanding the war), having been cut off, the country people have been obliged to keep their hogs, which would otherwise have been killed, and the salted pork put into store by the Carlists for the troops. This accounts for the great number of fat hogs which have been brought to market at Bibao since the siege was raised. Families are now, according to annual custom, laying in their stocks. The usual price of salt in Bilbao is five reals the fanega; it is now seven reals, because the stock is scant; but in the Carlist villages in the vicinity the price for the little that can be procured is ninety reals the fanega! This is quite sufficient to prove the importance of blockading the small ports on the

coast: it is only by making the deluded peasantry feel the power of the Queen's government that they can be brought to a sense of their duty, and to an appreciation of their true interests." (*Vide Appendix D.*)

"Jan. 15.—The bar having fortunately been practicable almost ever since the 25th December, considerable supplies of flour and other necessities have arrived at Portugalete, so that there is no want of anything here. A number of bullocks for the army have also arrived from Santander. Prices are rather higher than usual, and thus the poorer classes, many of whom have been left in a destitute condition in consequence of having lost their natural protectors during the siege, are still suffering severely."

"January 22.—Working parties are employed in clearing away the ruins of the convent of San Agustín, which is to be pulled down, and a fort erected on its site: this will be an important defence for the town. Provisions and other supplies daily arrive, and Bilbao is gradually assuming its natural appearance. Three companies are now stationed at the Desierto; thirty men are detached therefrom every morning at daylight to Monte Aspe, to protect the passage of the river; and the works for securing the banks of the Nervion will be commenced as soon as the British Sappers shall arrive from San Sebastian.

“The day before yesterday the *Comet* arrived from England—last from San Sebastian. Lieut. Turner, of the Royal Artillery, and Lieut. Lynn, of the Royal Engineers, both attached as aides-de-camp to Colonel Wylde, came out in the *Comet*, which brought the gratifying intelligence of the promotion of Commander Lapidge, of the *Ring-dove*, to the rank of post captain, and of Lieut. Le Hardy, of the *Saracen*, and Lieut. Otway, of the *Comet*, to the rank of commanders.

“These appointments were conveyed to Captain Lapidge and Commander Le Hardy (Commander Otway did not return in the *Comet*) by Commodore Lord John Hay, in the most handsome manner possible. His Lordship expressed his own high satisfaction at the promotion of officers whose professional merits had entitled them to the rewards now bestowed on them; and he enclosed a memorandum of thanks from the Admiralty to Captain Lapidge and all the officers and men under his command, for the able co-operation they have afforded to the cause of the Queen of Spain in the river of Bilbao. Lord John also enclosed a copy of a most satisfactory letter from his Excellency Mr. Villiers, forwarding the copy of a communication from Señor Calatrava, President of the Council, by order of her Majesty the Queen-Regent, conveying in her royal name, through the ambas-

sador, the grateful sense her Majesty entertains of the services of the officers and men of the British Navy on the late memorable occasion ; and Admiral Canas, who commands the Spanish naval forces on the coast of Cantabria, has, by her Majesty's orders (conveyed through the Minister of Marine), applied to Captain Lapidge for the names of all the officers of the *Ringdove*, *Saracen*, and *Comet*.

"The distinguished representative of the British Government, Colonel Wylde, has also received a communication of the most handsome and satisfactory nature from Mr. Villiers ; and I have no doubt but that, in addition to the marks of distinction so justly conferred on him by her Majesty (Colonel Wylde is now a Knight Commander of the noble order of Isabel the Catholic, in addition to the crosses of the upper grades of the orders of Carlos III. and San Fernando, with which he was already decorated, for former eminent services), we shall soon have the happiness of congratulating the gallant Colonel upon some high mark of approbation, on the part of our own King and Government, of the arduous and successful exertions of a representative of the British nation, who is universally honoured and esteemed by his countrymen and the Spaniards. You will have seen by the proceedings in the Cortes that the thanks of the Legislative Assembly have been justly voted to Lord John

Hay, as commander of the British naval forces on this coast, as well as to the officers and men under his command. I have reason to believe that a similar vote was intended to have been passed with regard to Colonel Wylde, whose name is so particularly mentioned in General Espartero's dispatches and proclamations, which were read and recorded in the Cortes. By some mistake, however, this due formality was omitted; but I am aware that communications of the most gratifying nature have been spontaneously made from Madrid to the British Government upon this subject.

"I must not omit to mention that among the naval promotions of officers on this station is that of Lieutenant Barlow, commanding his Majesty's brig *Royalist*, now at San Sebastian, to the rank of commander. Mr. Barlow is an excellent officer, who served for some time in the river Nervion, where he was employed on various arduous and important duties. Mr. Rogers, mate of the *Saracen*, a very deserving officer, is also appointed lieutenant.

"Lord Henry Russell arrived here from England, *via* San Sebastian, about ten days ago; he is on his way to join his Majesty's flag-ship at Lisbon, but will revisit San Sebastian and have a conference with Lord John Hay previously to proceeding to Madrid, which city he will take in his



way. His Lordship has visited all the remarkable points in this neighbourhood, and takes the greatest interest in the Queen's cause. Lord Henry Russell has been recently appointed to a lieutenancy on board the *Hastings*, seventy-four.

“The enthusiasm throughout the country with regard to the brave defenders of Bilbao is very great. The day before yesterday, the second in command of the National Guard of Vitoria, accompanied by the two other officers of the same corps, all three being principal inhabitants of the capital of Alava, arrived here, in order to congratulate the National Guard of Bilbao in the name of that of Vitoria. A solemn *Te Deum* was performed a few days ago in the church of San Juan; this ceremony was attended by all the Generals of the Army, the authorities, &c.

“It will be gratifying to the British public to know that nothing can exceed the good feeling evinced towards the English by all classes of the population of this heroic town. A similar feeling pervades the army. The inhabitants of Bilbao are very anxious to have an English garrison, and that the works about to be erected for the defence of the river should be garrisoned by British soldiers or marines. How far this can be accomplished I am not competent to judge; but I am satisfied that such a measure would give confi-

dence to the inhabitants, and tend, together with the fortification of the river, &c., more than any other measure, to revive the commercial prosperity of this town, where so many British interests are at stake.

“ Dispatches have been received from Commodore Lord John Hay, who is at Santander, expressing in the most handsome terms his entire approbation of the exertions of Captain Lapidge and the naval officers under his command during the late operations. His Lordship has also written to Major Colquhoun, commanding the Royal and Marine Artillery, in similar terms; the artillery under that gallant officer's directions was indeed splendidly served, and contributed in a great degree to the ultimate success of General Espartero's operations for the relief of Bilbao. Lord John Hay having promised General Evans that this detachment of artillery should return to San Sebastian as soon as Bilboa should be relieved, they will embark at eight this morning in his Majesty's steamer *Lightning* for that port. Captain Vicars, of the Royal Engineers, will remain here to superintend the works for the protection of the Bilbao River; some British military artificers will, I presume, be sent round from Santander to work under Captain Vicars' directions.

“ P.S.—The Artillery-officers, who have been

serving under Major Colquhoun, and who will return to San Sebastian this morning, are Lieutenants Basset and Clapperton, and Lieutenant Parke, of the Royal Marine Artillery."—*Morning Chronicle*.

Another Correspondent writes:—"In justice to a meritorious officer of the navy, Lord John Hay some short time since instituted a strict inquiry, to ascertain whether there was any truth in the report that Captain Turner had been engaged in the Carlist service before Bilbao. The result is, that his Lordship has found the report to be totally groundless, and the gallant officer in question stands exempt from the slightest imputation of having acted contrary to the rules and regulations of his own service."

The question of the *animus* of the unexpected and successful night assault, created a considerable sensation. The Christinos in Madrid would fain keep as much of the credit for Espartero and the Spaniards as possible. On the other hand, a Correspondent of a London evening ministerial paper, amongst the victorious British forces, writes:—

"Colonel Wylde, witnessing the disastrous consequences that would result to the interests of the Legion, which he has had always at heart, rode up to General Espartero and remonstrated with him on his intention of retiring. Espartero said he must withdraw his troops to Valmaceda, as it was

impossible to remain longer before Bilbao, knowing as he did the strength of the enemy's batteries, and the sacrifice of life that must be made in obtaining possession of one of the strongest of them, without which Bilbao must perish, or all under his command be lost. Colonel Wylde, who was in constant correspondence during the whole of the morning with Colonel Colquhoun, requested to know from General Espartero which of the batteries he deemed so well fortified. It was named, and forthwith made known to Colonel Colquhoun, who said that should not be the least obstacle; and *instantly*, with the British Marine Artillery, he advanced, covered by the Sailors of the *Ringdove* and the sixty men of the 10th regiment already named, and at the point of the bayonet drove the enemy from that position. A breach having been made in this place, the Marines and Sailors entered it."

Another Christino Correspondent states that it was Lord John Hay who remonstrated with, or rather threatened Espartero that he would withdraw every vessel, boat, officer and man belonging to the service of his Britannic Majesty, if he persisted in his intention of retreating upon Valmaceda. He relates the sequel as follows; and with regard to the point of "direct intervention," the account will be seen to be substantially the same

as that given in the ministerial journal, but this statement supplies us with fuller particulars:—

“This energetic and *well-timed threat* made the wavering General pause, and he began again to think of crossing the river and attacking the Carlist positions;—but declared he saw an insurmountable obstacle in a twenty-four pounder in a Carlist battery which commanded the crossing of the river. To this Colonel Colquhoun replied, that that should not long form any objection, and he soon after opened a fire upon the Carlist battery, which in a short time silenced the dreaded twenty-four pounder. Espartero then pointed to another and more distant battery which might prove a stumbling-block. The second objection was quickly done away with by Captain Lapidge, who, with the blue jackets and Marines of the *Ringdove*, landed on the right bank of the river, and, rushing up the height, took the battery in the most gallant manner. This noble example fired a Spanish regiment of Guards, who declared, that if not ordered to go on by the General, *they would proceed without his order*. In compliance with their intention a bridge of boats and rafts was constructed, and they passed over, followed by the rest of the army. The regiment of Guards and the English Marines and blue-jackets advanced against the fortified hill of the Banderas with the

most daring intrepidity ; and, though repulsed three times, at length succeeded in getting possession of it and dispersing the Carlists, but not without a great loss on both sides."

The *interference* of both Lord John Hay and Colonel Wylde is indeed clearly acknowledged (and having been successful, eulogized of course) by Espartero. His Report and Order of the day, fully admit and establish the facts that all the efforts of the native Christino army *alone* would have been totally ineffectual in preventing the fall of Bilbao.

The Correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle* continues:—

"General Espartero has written a dispatch to the Minister of War, in which, after speaking in the highest terms of the gallantry, judgment, and activity displayed in the late operations before Bilbao by Colonel Wylde, and the officers and men of the British navy and army,—he sends a list of the names of the officers whom he recommends for the decoration of the distinguished order of *Isabella la Catolica*, and of the men who are to have the order of Isabel II.; and in begging that her Majesty will approve of the same, he proposes also that the insignia of these Orders shall be sent to him immediately at the expense of Government, in order that he may

himself place them on the breast of each individual, after the permission of the British Government shall have been obtained. The General also proposes that a pension shall be granted by the Spanish Government to the widow and children of the late Mr. Rawle, master carpenter of the *Ring-dove*, who, you will remember, was killed by a cannon-ball whilst preparing to mount the carronades belonging to the *Saracen* in a battery above Burceña. Nothing, in fact, can be more gratifying than the manner in which the General and every officer and man of the army express themselves with regard to the British forces who have been co-operating with the Queen's troops during the siege."

REPORT OF GENERAL ESPARTERO ON THE VICTORY OF LUCHANA.

Head-quarters, Bilbao, Dec. 25.

EXCELLENT SIR,—The privations and sufferings of the troops I command have at length been worthily rewarded. Yesterday at four o'clock p.m. I ordered the embarkment of the light companies intrusted with the carrying of the enemy's battery at Luchana. In spite of the abundant fall of snow, the operation was successfully accomplished, in a few moments, (thanks to the bravery and enthusiasm of those troops, and to the efficient co-operation of the

British and Spanish Navy,) and the bridge was taken possession of. The enemy had broken it, but in an hour and a half it was re-established. The enemy concentrated imposing forces, and hastened to that spot. Already night had begun. Rain, snow and hail beat most tempestuously. The loss sustained by the army in the many hours of action has been considerable. The moments were critical, but vigorous bayonet charges rendered us masters of all the positions, and ended in the raising the siege of this town, which I have entered to day. All the ammunition, and immense stores have remained in our hands. We have taken eighteen or twenty pieces of ordnance, most of them heavy pounders. The bearer of this official bulletin will, as an eye-witness, give your Excellency the details. I cannot say more, owing to the precipitate departure of the steamer with these despatches, but I shall send a circumstantial bulletin of all the operations.

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THE GENERAL ORDER ISSUED BY ESPARTERO ON  
THE 26TH OF DEC. IN BILBAO.

Soldiers—All that can be said in your praise will be uttered by the whole world on learning the battle you have gained. My heart is beside itself with pleasure at seeing its best wishes fulfilled, and so lost in admiration of your valour, that I cannot



develop my ideas, or coolly describe your unexampled triumph.

The memorable day of the 24th was most tempestuous. A dreadful hurricane and heavy snow mingled with hail did but increase your ardour. In your cheerless bivouac I heard you express only your anxious wishes, that the night might prove fortunate for Bilbao. With soldiers possessed of such spirit, what enterprise could a General hesitate to undertake? It was necessary to wait for the tide, in order that the rafts and boats might reach the broken bridge of Luchana at the mouth of the river Asua. Four in the evening arrived. The companies of *caçadores*, commanded by the brave Ulibarrena, embarked. The *trincaduras* of our marine protected the convoy. The English and Spanish batteries, with the forces previously placed in the tower of Luchana, favoured the embarkation. At this moment a dense fall of snow prevented every object from being distinguished. But the victors, inflamed by the sound of cannon and of trumpets, poured forth repeated acclamations of "*Viva la Reyna y Libertad!*" To leap ashore, to seize the battery on the road, rout the enemy, to climb Monte de Cabras, and capture the battery there, was the work of a quarter of an hour. But these companies were too insignificant a force with which to break the enemy's lines. It was neces-

sary to re-establish the bridge of Luchana, in order to facilitate the passage of the rest of the army. The materials in readiness allowed *our* Engineers to prepare this bridge with solidity and haste. But the enemy assembled to defend their formidable heights; and we have to lament, soldiers, the loss of many valiant comrades of the second division, who had sworn to die rather than retreat.

It was necessary to reinforce them. After many hours of deadly fire, the moment appeared critical; and the presence of your General was demanded. I flew to the centre of the hot combat, at the head of the battalion of Colonel Minuissir's brigade, in order to decide the victory. I foresaw that we should achieve it from your prolonged and enthusiastic '*Vivas!*' Let us give our tribute of praise to the column which, without a shot, dislodged the enemy with the bayonet from the summit of the Banderas, capturing the battery which had worked us so much disaster, and, afterwards, all the successive positions as far as Bilbao! Let us bestow our contempt on certain cowards who would not follow the example of such heroism, and whose punishment I still hold in reserve.

Soldiers! the pride of thirty Carlist battalions has been humbled and crushed by your valour. A multitude of prisoners, twenty-five pieces of

Artillery, the greater part of large calibre,—a quantity of ammunition, an immense *materiel*, magazines, transports, hospitals, all were the prize of your valour! Heroic Bilbao! its worn and suffering garrison could not believe that it was its liberators who crowned the heights of Banderas, and had driven the rebel hordes from Olaveaga!

In leading you from Portugalete I promised to lead you to victory:—and you offered your blood! I have fulfilled my promise, and you have kept your's. Recompense remains as my only duty towards those who distinguished themselves, and who shall see their reward in my General Order of to-morrow.

How immense has been our triumph! Receive my gratitude; prepare to reap all the fruits of so memorable a battle, fought after so many partial actions and forty days of painful operations! Prepare for the new triumphs that await you! Proud of having led you to victory, your General will know how to reward the brave!

ESPARTERO.

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The letter of Colonel Wylde to Lord Palmerston may also find an appropriate place here, as confirmatory of the extent of British interference. The error respecting the capture of "the whole of the Artillery" has been already corrected. Another mistake should also be rectified. "The Command-

ing officer of Artillery and Engineers" was not taken. Neither of the two Generals of Artillery, (the brothers Montenegro) nor the General of Engineers (Sylvestre,) ever fell into Espartero's hands. Commandante Trovo was the individual captured.

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COLONEL WYLDE'S DISPATCH TO LORD  
PALMERSTON.

Bilbao, Dec. 25.

I have the sincerest satisfaction of informing your Lordship that the siege of Bilbao was raised, and General Espartero entered the city at the head of his advanced guard early this morning, and the rest of the army are at this moment defiling through and taking up their cantonments round it.

The enemy have been completely routed, and the whole of the artillery captured, as well as the Commanding officer of Artillery and Engineers, and a considerable number of prisoners; but I cannot give your Lordship the details at present.

The attack commenced about four yesterday afternoon with eight picked companies, who were embarked in launches and rafts opposite the Desierto about four o'clock in the afternoon, the foremost launches being towed by the crews of the *Ringdove* and *Saracen*, Captain Lapidge and Lieutenant Le Hardy leading in their gigs, covered by four Spanish gun-boats, and protected by the fire

of the Spanish and British Royal and Marine Artillery, the latter under the command of Major Colquhoun. In this order they pushed on past the enemy's advanced battery, and landed the troops immediately in its rear, with scarcely any loss; the enemy abandoning both it and their entrenchments on the broken bridge of Luchana almost immediately. This point gained, the rafts were moored alongside the bridge, to enable the column that marched along the quay to advance, until the engineers could repair the bridge. The enemy appear to have been taken completely by surprise, not being able to observe the embarkation of the troops in consequence of a heavy fall of snow at the time; and had it not been for the cheers of the troops giving them warning of their approach, many prisoners would have been made here. As soon as the battalions passed the bridge they formed, and pushed up the heights of Cabras, leading to the Banderas; and gained possession of them before the Carlists could collect force enough to prevent their establishing themselves. About nine o'clock, however, the Carlists made a desperate attempt to dislodge them, and partly effected their object, which they repeated three times during the night, but were at length finally repulsed, after four or five hours' hard fighting; and General Espartero, placing himself at the head of two bat-

talions, carried the enemy's battery of three heavy guns, and the height and fort of Banderas at the point of the bayonet. From this moment the flight of the enemy commenced, the main body by the Durango road, and the rest, (who had been left to observe Bilbao,) over two bridges of boats they had constructed opposite the village of Olaveaga, which they had not time to destroy.

I cannot yet ascertain the loss on the part of the Queen's troops, but it has been severe; the two battalions of guards alone having lost nine officers killed and twenty-three wounded, and nearly 500 men. Bilbao appears to have suffered considerably, one of its suburbs being nearly entirely in ruins. I believe about one thousand to twelve hundred of its garrison have been killed and wounded.

I can assure your Lordship that it is impossible to praise too highly the indefatigable zeal and energy which has been displayed by Captain Lapidge, Lieutenant Le Hardy, Lieutenant Otway and all the officers and crews of the *Ringdove*, *Saracen* and *Comet*, during the harassing operations carried on in the river for the last month; and I had the gratification of being requested by General Espartero to convey to them and to Major Colquhoun and Lieutenant Vicars of the Engineers, and all the officers under them, his

warmest thanks the moment he entered Bilbao, and assurances that without the aid of the British force he could not have succeeded in relieving Bilbao. I have, &c.

(Signed) J. W. WYLDE, Lieut.-Colonel.

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The dashing style in which Christino successes are increased and magnified in successive bulletins is illustrated by the following second-hand article, published by Brigadier Jauregui on the raising of the siege. It is dated San Sebastian, Dec. 29:—

“After an obstinate and sanguinary engagement on the 24th, which lasted from four in the afternoon till six the following morning, the Queen's troops made their victorious entry into Bilbao. Our loss was 800 men put *hors de combat*; that of the rebels is nearly 1,000. We have taken from them 25 pieces of cannon and a quantity of ammunition. The enemy retreated in disorder towards Galdacano and Durango, and we are informed that a number of the insurgent Biscayans have left the Carlist army. This glorious victory, to which the batteries of the English Navy have powerfully contributed, has been gained amidst a tremendous storm of rain and snow. The bravery of our troops was never more brilliantly displayed than on this occasion, on which they have conquered an enemy

placed in a most formidable position. On the 27th, 860 prisoners were brought into Bilbao.

(Signed)

“JAUREGUI.”

Here 15 cannons magnified to 25! 260 killed and wounded, blown up to 1000! 65 prisoners to 860; *et ceteris paribus*. The following is the

ADDRESS TO LORD JOHN HAY BY THE CONSTITUTIONAL CORTES OF THE SPANISH NATION.

My Lord,—The General Cortes of the Spanish nation beheld with singular satisfaction the noble conduct of your Lordship during the important services which the ships of the British Royal Navy, and other forces under your command, have rendered to the national cause on every occasion. Your Lordship did more—you sought them anxiously, and your zeal and valour turned them to still greater advantage in the memorable siege of Bilbao. The whole of Spain felt grateful to you, and, considering herself bound to give to the world a public manifestation of her sentiments, the Cortes have framed a decree, of which the enclosed is a copy. Receive it, my Lord, as a testimony of gratitude and consideration towards yourself, and to the individuals who were acting under your orders in so marked a victory, which has excited the gratitude and admiration of the national congress.



In executing the agreeable commission with which the Cortes have charged me, I beg your Lordship will be so good as to accept the distinguished consideration and respect with which I have the honour to be your Lordship's, &c.

(Signed) JOAQUIN MARIA DE FERRER,  
*President.*

Palace of the Cortes, Jan. 14, 1837.

Commodore the Right Hon. Lord John Hay,  
commanding his Britannic Majesty's Squadron  
on the coast of Cantabria.

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His Majesty's steam ship, *Phoenix*.  
Passages, Jan. 30, 1837.

EXCELLENT SIR,—I feel it impossible to express to your Excellency the high gratification with which myself, the officers and men composing the British force employed on the coast of Cantabria, have received the distinguished honour the Constitutional Cortes of this great and enlightened nation have been pleased to confer upon us.

If, in the discharge of the duties imposed on me by the government of my gracious Sovereign, I have had the good fortune in any degree to aid the Constitutional cause of her Catholic Majesty and her people, I feel that the services performed by the British Squadron have been more than amply and generously rewarded by this spontaneous

mark of approbation of the assembled General Cortes.

The brilliant example of heroism and of every virtue that can attach to loyalty and true patriotism exhibited by the commercial city of Bilbao during the late siege, must have a happy influence on the future events of this contest; while the cordial union which exists between the British and Spanish nations gives an earnest that these friendly ties will become every day closer, and of increasing mutual prosperity.

In thus conveying to the Constitutional Cortes, through the medium of your Excellency, the sincere acknowledgments of myself, the officers, and men composing the British Squadron under my command, for the distinguished honour conferred upon us, I beg your Excellency will accept the high expression of esteem and consideration with which I have the honour to be, Excellent Sir, your Excellency's most obedient servant,

JOHN HAY,

Commodore in command of his Britannic  
Majesty's Squadron employed on the  
north coast of Spain.

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On the 6th of February, the principal church of San Sebastian exhibited a scene of solemn pomp,

of which a previous notification had been formally given to all who were invited to assist at it, by the civil and military authorities. It being determined that a grand requiem should be chanted, in conformity with the usual rites of the Roman Catholic Church, for the repose of the souls of those men who fell while defending Bilbao, the Spanish troops of the line, followed by the Urbanos and Chapelgorris, formed in procession at an early hour, moving on with reversed arms, and having their colours bound round with black crape. All the principal officers of the Legion attended on the occasion, headed by General Evans; and Lord John Hay, with the officers of his department, walked along in the order prescribed by their several gradations of rank. In the centre of the church a large *catafalque*, or funereal monument, was erected. It was surmounted with the national flag, and had on the sides appropriate inscriptions in Latin and Spanish. Lord John Hay took his station with the Alcalde and other civic functionaries to the right of the grand altar, and General Evans sat upon the left, having next to him the Spanish Admiral and General Chichester, while the staff and other officers ranged themselves along in front of the *catafalque*. The music was admirably executed throughout, and, as a state affair, the whole ceremony passed off as well as could be expected.

## ILLUMINATIONS AND "GLORY!" AT MADRID. 201

The sensation produced at Madrid, by the news of the relief of Bilbao, proved full well in what a vulnerable point the Queen's authority had been assailed, and well nigh shaken to its centre. The following brief details are collected from the statements of the correspondents of the *Morning Post*, the *Morning Herald*, and the *Morning Chronicle*, resident in the Spanish capital.

New year's day was ushered in with peals from the bells of Madrid, all of which were put into requisition, to celebrate the triumph of the Queen's arms before Bilbao. As a matter of course, an extraordinary *Gazette* was published, with a short despatch from Espartero, announcing the intelligence. The theatres, the public establishments, and the houses of the partisans of the present institutions were illuminated. Next day the public prints were loud in praise of the heroic General-in-Chief, who, for a long time before, had been the object of the bitterest and most envenomed attacks of the press. "Bilbao is saved!" exclaims a writer in one of these journals, "and the rebels have experienced before its gates, the death-blow which annihilates their hopes for ever! Glory to the *valientes*, who have acquired eternal renown! Glory to the first of free towns!—Glory to the invincible Bilbao!"

The sitting of the Cortes of the 2nd of January,

was almost exclusively occupied in panegyrics upon its valiant defenders, and in discussing proposals of honours and rewards to the survivors in the conflict.

Long before the appointed hour, the galleries were filled with anxious spectators ; and after the Chamber had elected Messrs. Ferrer, Olozaga, and Fernandez Vallejo, for the offices of President, Vice-President, and Secretary, during the month of January, a proposal, declaring "that the defenders of Bilbao, and the General and troops that had raised the siege of that city, deserved well of their country," was put in and read.

The Minister of War then rose and read Espartero's Dispatch, which was received with the greatest applause.

The Minister of the Interior, Señor Lopez, next addressed the house in a speech of extraordinary grandiloquence. He said, "From the commencement of the siege of Bilbao, the government was convinced of the necessity of raising it at all hazard. We were aware that the Pretender was most anxious to take possession of that city, which circumstance would afford him ample means of prosecuting his attempts against the liberty of the nation ; and it was for this reason that we gave the strictest orders to the Commander-in-Chief to spare no sacrifice necessary to raise the siege. Success has

crowned the efforts of the government, and the ardent wishes of all good Spaniards. The Cortes have heard all that has passed. Every thing is admirable, sublime, and heroic. With such commanders and soldiers, Señores, nothing is impossible, nothing is difficult. They can do what they like, and (rising in emphasis), *command destiny itself!*—*They scale Heaven, and realise the fable of the Titans!* Our army has not fought alone an enemy tenaciously bent upon his purposes and operations, possessing formidable positions, whose valour and despair had collected all his resources. No, *it has fought nature itself*, and the fury of the elements let loose upon it;—yet even *over the elements it has triumphed!* 'Midst the darkness of the night, and benumbed with cold, they were for a while obliged to yield to the fury of the tempest; they fell back, but 'twas only for a moment. They then rushed forward to the strife, vanquished their opponents, and again unfurled the banner of liberty. There is a particular circumstance connected with the noble feat of arms which our troops have achieved, and which, I believe, can only be related of Spanish soldiers. At midnight, and chilled to death, they were obliged to huddle together, and cover their persons with the dead bodies of friends and foes, by way of shelter against the inclemency of the weather! Assailed by the tempest—drenched

with rain, snow, and hail, in the depth of a terrible night, the Spanish army has proved superior to every obstacle of art or nature; and it was not obliged to exclaim, like a celebrated chief of antiquity, at the siege of a city, *perhaps* not more famous than Bilbao,—‘Great Jove, give us the light of day, and then, if you like, take part against us!’—No, our soldiers know how to conquer in the midst of darkness as well as in the light of day. They want the solar rays only to illumine their triumph, and show the radiant standard of liberty waving over the fields and mountains of Bilbao, whilst *the corpses of slain enemies serve it for a throne!* Their deeds exceed all exaggeration, as their merit exceeds any recompense that can be offered to them by their country! The government will remunerate their services; but the greatest reward for these brave warriors will be the satisfaction of having saved their brethren of Bilbao, and for ever ensured their country’s happiness. The inextinguishable aureola of glory will play upon their brows, and light them to the tomb on which immortality will for ever repose! This triumph is but the prelude of others more splendid which await us. Government will not sleep in the arms of victory. We shall assemble all our forces, invade the very heart of the Faction, take possession of the Pretender’s court, and there raise a

trophy to national justice and liberty, with an inscription which, similar to that attached by a neighbouring country to one of its rebellious cities, shall declare—‘This place was the nucleus of the war waged against liberty:—it has ceased to exist.’”

When Señor Lopez concluded his speech, proposals, “returning thanks to the Spanish and English Naval forces on the station, and requesting that an autograph communication expressive of the satisfaction of the Cortes, should be addressed by the President to the Corporation of Bilbao,—to the Commanders of its National Militia—to General Espartero,—to the commander of her Majesty’s Naval forces on the northern station,—and to Lord John Hay,”—were read and adopted unanimously.

M. Lujan dwelt at length on the heroic conduct of the Army of the north, declaring:—“The siege of Bilbao will eternize the gallantry, valour, and serenity of the Spanish soldier. Whilst the troops, who style themselves the descendants and inheritors of the conquerors of Austerlitz and Marengo, of the men, who declared themselves invincible at Moscow, at Jena, who conquered at Leutzen, and at the battle of the Pyramids,—whilst those troops were vanquished by the elements at Constantina, the soldiers of Espartero overcame the elements themselves!”



M. Domenech observed, "The British Naval forces have done as much, nay, more than could be expected from them. Our own have performed prodigies of valour; but it may be said, they are Spaniards; they fight for their country and liberty; and the enthusiasm which fires their bosoms suffices to render them brave: but the British sailors, who have behaved so nobly at Bilbao, did not fight for their country. We have to struggle both for our country and our liberties. They possess both, and therefore the Committee of National Rewards should not forget what has been so disinterestedly done by them, when the honours of the victory are to be distributed. I am so overpowered by my feelings, that I cannot continue. Long live Bilbao the free!"

A proposal, signed by several deputies, calling upon the Cortes to have the blank tablet in the Chamber filled up with the following inscription, was read, and approved:—"To the immortal Bilbao—to its heroic defenders—and to the valiant Liberating Army, the Spanish nation vows eternal gratitude."

Voluntary donations were made for the relief of the sufferers by the siege. At the head of the list appeared the name of Señor Mendizabal for four thousand *reals* (about forty pounds sterling). None of the Ministers subscribed a higher amount

than this. Don Miguel Santa Maria, Envoy Extraordinary from the Republic of Mexico, and his colleagues, presented to the Government 20,000 reals as a gift from the Legation to be applied to the relief of the orphans and widows of those who had fallen in the struggle. The bank of San Fernando and other public offices, followed the example, and the National Guards subscribed very liberally.

The Stock Exchange, of course, felt the movement imparted to all minds. On the first day the prices upon all stock went up five per cent. The public treasury also felt the effects of the increasing confidence in the stability of the Christino Government.

Señor Mendizabal pointed to Bilbao as a proof of the accuracy of his prediction of September, 1835, that the civil war might be terminated by *national* resources; and all the public men who had been prominent in their opposition to the introduction of French bayonets into Spain, claimed the issue of this trial of strength, as the triumph of their opinions and the justification of their confidence! Col. Wylde was again forgotten!

In the *Gazette* of the 4th January, appeared the following

“ROYAL DECREE.

“Desiring to reward in the most solemn manner

the sufferings and virtues, as well of the valiant defenders of Bilbao in the protracted and vigorous siege, which, for the third time, it has just sustained,—as of the troops which with so much glory, delivered that town from the enemy during the memorable days of the 24th and 25th of last December;—I have decreed, in accordance with my Council of Ministers, in the name of my exalted daughter Queen Isabel II. as follows:—

“Article 1. I declare with all the force of my maternal love, the town of Bilbao, its garrison and National Militia, the General-in-chief Don Baldomero Espartero, the army under his command, the National Marine, the British auxiliary force, and all the individuals, as well Spanish as English, who in a manner so heroic have defended, liberated, and co-operated in saving that immortal place, and whose brilliant efforts have concurred to give a day of glory to the nation,—to have fully responded to my hopes, and to equally deserve my gratitude.

“Art. 2. The town of Bilbao will add the title of ‘invincible’ to those which it already enjoys of *‘most noble and loyal.’*

“Art. 3. The corporation of the invincible town of Bilbao will be entitled henceforth to the style of ‘Excellency’ in its corporate capacity, and each of its members to the appellation of ‘Lordship’ (*Señoría*) during his period of office.

“ Art. 4. I grant to all the battalions of the garrison of Bilbao and of its national militia, the use in their banners of the insignia of the military order of San Fernando.

“ The like privilege I grant to all the corps of the Liberating Army which have most distinguished themselves in the judgment of the General-in-Chief.

“ Art. 5. confers a cross of distinction upon the defenders of Bilbao with the motto—‘ I defended the invincible town of Bilbao in its third siege, 1836.’

“ Art. 6. confers the same cross, with the words ‘ I saved Bilbao,’ to all soldiers, officers, and chiefs of the Liberating Army, and to all the individuals of the national and allied marine, military and mercantile, who contributed gloriously and effectively to raise the siege of Bilbao.

“ Art 7. grants to Don Baldomero Espartero and his lineal descendants the order of Nobility of Castile, with the denomination of Count of Luchana.

“ Art. 8. directs that on Sunday, 5th February next, shall be performed in all cathedrals, and parish churches throughout the kingdom, religious solemnities in memory of the brave men slain in defence of Bilbao.

“ Art. 9. My government will propose to the Cortes, firstly, that all edifices of private property which have been destroyed by the besieging faction of the invincible Bilbao shall be restored at the cost

of the nation. Secondly, that also at the cost of the nation, when its circumstances shall permit, shall be erected in the most convenient spot of the invincible Bilbao an appropriate and majestic monument to record to posterity its value and patriotism in the sieges it has sustained against a fratricidal faction. Thirdly, that to the widows and orphans of the defenders and liberators of Bilbao, be granted the pensions to which respectively they shall be deemed entitled; this charge forming henceforth a separate head in the general estimates of the nation.

“ Art. 10. The Governor of Bilbao, the General-in-chief of the army, and the Commandant of the Naval forces which have assisted, will propose to me without delay such other rewards as individuals under their command may have earned.”

“ Palace, Jan. 3, 1837.”

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In the sitting of the 6th instant the Committee of National Rewards proposed the following Bill to the consideration of the Cortes:—

“ Article 1. The defenders of Bilbao, and the army and navy, as well Spanish as English, who contributed towards raising the siege, deserve well of the country.

“ Art. 2. The President of the Cortes shall write an autograph letter to the General-in-chief, Don

Baldomero Espartero, in testimony of the nation's gratitude, directing him to return thanks in the name of the Cortes to all the Generals, officers, and troops, as well of the Army as the Navy who had assisted in the defence of Bilbao, or in raising the siege; and another to the illustrious Commodore of his Britannic Majesty's Naval forces stationed on the coast of Cantabria, for the services which his Marines and Sailors have rendered to our cause; and finally, another to the Corporation of Bilbao, to the authorities, the national Militia and inhabitants, which is to be read every year on the 25th of December with due solemnity.

"Art. 3. The ground hitherto occupied by the Capuchin convent in Madrid is to be destined for a square, to be called '*La Plaza de Bilbao*,' in the centre of which a bronze monument of elegant and simple construction, is to be erected for the purpose of perpetuating the glory of the defenders and liberators of that invincible town.

"Art. 4. The government shall be authorized—  
1st, to defray out of the national purse the reconstruction of all the edifices belonging to loyal subjects which had been destroyed during the siege—  
2dly, the erection of a simple and majestic monument, in the most convenient situation, which shall manifest to posterity the valour displayed by the inhabitants of Bilbao during the sieges which they

sustained against the Carlist faction;—and 3dly, the amount of the pensions which may be accorded to the widows and orphans of the defenders and liberators of Bilbao.”

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Mr. Villiers, the British Ambassador, received a splendid serenade from the inhabitants of Bilbao resident in Madrid, in token of the gratitude due to his countrymen for their gallant and successful efforts to compel the Carlists to raise the siege.

During the ensuing Carnival in Madrid the public balls were very fully attended. A series of six was given in the grand saloon of the new theatre of the Oriente, in the neighbourhood of the palace, for the benefit of the widows and orphans of Bilbao and were attended by all the people of Madrid, great and small. It was said that the Queen was there once *incog*. Her sister, the wife of the Infante Don Francisco, certainly attended one. The price of the tickets was a dollar and a half; and as at one ball there were six thousand persons, the receipts for that single night amounted to about 1,800*l.*; a very handsome contribution from the patriotic masqueraders of Madrid.

On the day of High Carnival, (Sunday) the funeral ceremony for the souls of the victims of Bilbao was performed with great pomp and solem-

nity in the church of San Isidro. The entire body of the National Guards were drawn up in the street of Toledo, reaching from the *Plaza de la Constitution* to the gate of Toledo, about a mile in length. A party of masquers in black, to personate the ghosts of the slain at Bilbao, paraded the town, bearing emblematic banners, while attendant bands performed appropriate airs, solemn and patriotic. During the three last days of the Carnival, when, according to custom, people traversed the Prado and the open streets in masks and dominos of various devices, the groups passed amid throngs of gazers without exciting any stronger feeling than that which was evinced in the mere idle regard of ordinary curiosity; but the ghosts of the Bilbaonians attracted extraordinary attention.



## CHAPTER X.

SHORTLY after my arrival at Bayonne, an article which first appeared in the *Courier* (London) Newspaper, reached that town in the columns of *Galignani's Messenger*, and created not a little surprise both to myself and my friends there. On reaching Durango after the retreat from Bilbao, I had written to Mr. Mitchell, the resident correspondent of *The Morning Herald*, at Bayonne, a gentleman from whom I had received much kind attention and valuable information during my short sojourn there, and whom I wished to apprise of my safety and intention of returning thither for the winter. This letter Mr. Mitchell never received,—it having fallen, by accident, into Christino hands, by whom it appears to have been mutilated, interpolated and altered at pleasure,—then forwarded to London, where a *Liberal* newspaper printed it as genuine for the enlightenment of a “generous and confiding public.” I have marked in italics the forged interlineations, which struck me

on the instant I perused them, as expressions and ideas perfectly foreign to me; but my memory does not extend to the restoration of portions, where obvious erasures have been made, with the exception of "2000 reals," transmuted into a "couple of dollars" and two "parcels of tea" metamorphosed into "bottles of Scotch whiskey" viz. :—

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INTERCEPTED TORY CORRESPONDENCE.

(From the *Courier*.)

Extract of a letter from our Correspondent at San Sebastian, dated January 5th:—"I have the pleasure of sending you a copy of a letter intercepted and delivered to Lieutenant-General Evans to-day. The writer, who signs himself E. B. Stephens, is undoubtedly the able correspondent of a Morning Tory Paper, who writes in a style scarcely less amusing than that of Walpole himself; and as the letter is addressed to Mr. Mitchell, the correspondent of another Morning Tory Paper, should the Tories of England doubt what may be stated by the Liberals, they may perhaps be inclined to give credit to the confidential communication of two of their own best friends. I have scarcely a moment to spare; nor is it necessary, as Mr. Stephens's letter will give you a more correct idea of things than any thing that could come from San Sebastian; but I may add that the fact

of the baggage of Lord Ranelagh having been captured cannot be doubted, as the most valuable articles belonging to him are here in San Sebastian, except the splendid wigs and perfumery, so humorously described by his friend. His drawing of the enemy's lines is in the possession of General Evans, and I believe also his diary. If as well written as Stephens's letter, and properly ornamented with a drawing of his Lordship, in the magnificent dressing-gown, it will be a literary gem. You must know that the action was not believed serious in the early part of the night; and that the Queen's troops actually retired, until fresh orders were sent to them to make good their positions. It would be, *I suppose*, on this occasion, that his Lordship acted the part of devil incarnate, and slaughtered his foes; and he would then, I suppose, go to bed quietly, never dreaming they would have the audacity to disturb the slumbers of Louis XIV., and rob him of his wigs and perfumery. His Lordship little expected such a visit. In the room he had occupied, was found a book open, which it was supposed he had been reading, when the news of 'They are coming!' forced its way into his ears, in spite of his wig. No news of importance."

"The following is the intercepted letter referred to by our Correspondent:—

"Durango, Tuesday, Dec. 27.

"MY DEAR MITCHELL,—*Thank God I'm alive,* and I write to tell you that we are all safe; that is Ranelagh, Butts and Son, Humphrey Bell and myself; *we have had a most infernal drubbing. What has become of the army Heaven knows; it has been a complete débacle.* I know little more than that Espartero took the broken bridge of Luchana on Saturday evening because it was not defended by a sufficient force. Ranelagh and Bell fought *like devils*, charging at the head of thirty men to retake the advanced post; but a scoundrelly Captain of the 6th Regiment of Biscay, who I hope will be publicly disgraced, said, that he was of the Reserve, and drew off his men, so that our friends found themselves fighting against Espartero with five Biscayans. *Que voulez-vous?* The Trincaduras came sweeping up, and clearing the causeway with grape shot; the column gained a footing on the hill, and *made a hurra* on the Banderas, which they carried before the dawn. The cry *along our line* then was 'they are coming;' this was quite enough for me, so I mounted my mule, and *galloped off ventre a terre*, along the Camino Real de Munguia: the infantry *fled* through the snow to Galdacano: the Prince and suite with the artillery (*i. e.* all that was saved), to Guernica. *Ranelagh,*

Colonel Butts and Son, minus their baggage, gained the same place on foot—*poor Ranelagh, in a magnificent dressing-gown a la Louis Fourteenth. The whole of his baggage, including his splendid toilette-case, well stocked with Delcroix's most exquisite perfumery, and two of Truefit's elaborately-made wigs, fell into the hands of the Christinos.* For myself, I rode on, without a peseta in my pocket, to find out the Señora Calle, who gave me *a couple of dollars instead of two hundred*, alleging that she would probably very soon be in Bayonne, and therefore would then pay me the rest—*cold comfort this ! Entre nous, the game is up, and I shall cut my stick ;* you may, therefore, expect to see me in Bayonne almost immediately ; *to tell you the truth, I'm dead beaten.* I hope the new manifold machine has not been dispatched hither from Bayonne ; pray write and tell me, if I have any chance of finding on this side the Pyrennees, my surtout, umbrella, and the two *bottles of Scotch Whiskey—*(there's no swallowing their accursed aguardiente ;) also how the devil I'm to get across the frontier *to Irun* with my baggage, and whether I could travel better to St. Juan de Luz, with or without my mule : I know I can sell her at Irun for what she cost me at Estella, but I don't know if I can manage my baggage so as to avoid delay at Behobie without her help ; *but after all, sell her I must, for I am*

*regularly cleaned out.* Tell me also what I am to say to the people at the passport-office there? I still retain my Bayonne receipt for my English one. Shall I bring one from Don *Gulielmo* Sierra? The day after I receive your letter, I shall start for Bayonne, *and happy shall I be to find myself once more, with a whole skin, at the Hotel St. Etienne, for I have had quite enough of this cut-throat work;* therefore request that d—d h—g, the M—s de L—l—de to keep all letters and newspapers for me, lest they should cross me on the road. Many thanks for all favours: my dear Mitchell, in haste for post, after riding over the snow from Guernica,

"Most truly yours,

"E. B. STEPHENS."

The London papers brought, in addition, the following lines, which evince an amusing power of versification; and, with the exception of a couple of cockney rhymes, and a few sprained feet, present a superior specimen of epistolary travestie.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL DISPATCH FROM A  
CORRESPONDENT AT HEAD-QUARTERS.

"Durango, Tuesday, Dec. 27.

"Dear M——l,

"Thank God, we're all living and well,  
That is, R——, self, the two Butts, and H. Bell:

Though we've had a sound beating, I'm sorry to tell ye,  
 And the Catholic army is mauled to a jelly.  
 By a bridge we had broken, our outposts to cover,  
 On Saturday night the Christinos got over,  
 Because Espartero had managed to mend it,  
 Before our fine fellows were there to defend it.  
 And though R—— charged like the d—l from h—l,  
 With thirty Biscayans and brave Humphrey Bell,  
 Yet a scoundrelly captain, I wish they may break him,  
 Swore loudly *his* post was the rear, devil take him!  
 And left with five men our Conservative hero,  
 To fight all the army of brave Espartero!  
*Que voulez vous*, friend? they came tearing and shouting,  
 Took by storm the Banderas, and forced our redoubt in:  
 And soon with their guns swept the causeway so clean,  
 That there was not a rag of our corps to be seen.  
 Our infantry scampered like chaff from the wind,  
 The Prince, suite, and cannon, came limping behind;  
 And as for myself, I am free to confess,  
 I was never so hurried to *get through the press*.  
 So I galloped my mule off as fast as she *can* go,  
 Nor thought myself safe till I got to Durango:  
 While R—— trudged it on foot, which was worse,  
 In a flower'd dressing-gown *a la Louis Quatorze*.  
 But, alas! all his baggage, arms, uniforms, plumes,  
 With Truefitt's best wig, and Delcroix's best perfumes:  
 With a splendid *toilette* case, and all that was in it,  
 By the rascally Queenites was grabbed in a minute.  
*Carajo!* to think of that greasy mobility  
 Overhauling the wardrobe of English gentility—  
 Accourting their *cuerpos* in yeomanry dresses,  
 Their noddles in Truefitt's superlative tresses,  
 And becoming, the first time for many a year,  
 Acquainted with soap, at the expense of a Peer!

*Entre nous*, the game's up: I shall e'en cut my stick,  
 And make off for the frontier uncommonly quick:  
 Therefore send me no more your new manifold writers,  
 To ingross the great deeds of legitimate fighters:  
 For in truth I'm dead beat, and, to make my tale shorter,  
 The — must look out for another Reporter.  
 So pray tell me where I can find, my dear fellow,  
 On this side the mountains, my cloak and umbrella,  
 With two bottles of whiskey, (I wish they were twenty,)
 For I can drink no more of their curst *aguardiente*.  
 Also tell me how I and my baggage can get out  
 To Irun, and whether 'twere better to set out  
 With my mule or without her: I know I can sell her  
 At Irun, for what she cost me at Estella:  
 And sell her I must, there's nought else to lay hand on,  
 And her legs are the last I have left me to stand on.  
 I'm off for Bayonne when your answer I hear,  
 And if I've the luck once to find myself there,  
 With a sound skin and whole, at Hotel St. Etienne,  
 The fiend may catch me o'er the frontier again!  
 For I think that this cut-throat employment of mine  
 Would be scurvily paid at a guinea a line.  
 So tell that d—d h—b—g, M— de L—l—de,  
 To keep all my letters and papers in hand.  
 Adieu my dear M——, no time to be lost,  
 Truly yours,

E. B. S——,

In haste for the *Post*.

Leaving aside the amusing imitations of the  
 poet, who certainly possesses "a talent of versi-  
 fication," I owe it to my readers (as well as to  
 myself and my friends), to correct some of the



poetic portions of the prose epistle. Lord Ranclagh was never at Guernica—was not on foot during the retreat—did not lose his baggage—and had no wigs, perfumery, toilette case, or magnificent dressing-gown, at the siege. I had never been, previous to my return, at the Hotel St. Etienne—there is no such person as Humphrey Bell—and Irun was not "over the frontier."—I never used the coarse and desponding expressions referring to the army and the cause of Don Carlos, or the still more vulgar and calumnious epithet applied to the noble and truly excellent individual adverted to in the conclusion of the compilation.

To put the matter to the test, I immediately wrote four letters; one to *The Morning Post*, stating the facts of the forgery, calling on the Editor of *The Courier* to procure from his Correspondent, or from General Evans, the original stolen letter; demanding, as an act of simple justice, that all who were personally interested should have an opportunity of inspecting that letter at *The Courier* office; and of tracing the fabrications to their source:—the second, third, and fourth, were as follow; all of which were published in every London paper, with the exception of *The Courier*.

No. 2.

" Bayonne, 31st January, 1837.

" SIR—In *Galignani's Messenger* of the 17th instant, I find an article commencing as follows :—

" ' INTERCEPTED TORY CORRESPONDENCE.

(From *The Courier*.)

" ' Extract of a letter from our correspondent at San Sebastian, dated January 5.

" ' I have the pleasure of sending you a copy of a letter intercepted and delivered to Lieutenant-General Evans to-day. The writer, who signs himself E. B. Stephens, is' &c.

" I perceive that this letter is also copied into *The Morning Chronicle* of the 14th instant. As these papers, I understand, are regularly transmitted to you, I need only direct your attention to their respective dates, and proceed at once to inform you that I have this day written to *The Morning Post*, stating that the letter referred to, and to which my signature appears attached, is in all its essential parts, personal and political, a calumnious forgery, the stock-jobbing perpetrator of which deserves to be expelled for ever from the society of gentlemen.

" *The Courier's* correspondent having thought proper to connect your name with this infamous affair, I write on the instant to afford you the

opportunity of rescuing it from the disgrace of any participation in the matter of furnishing 'the copy;' and to request that you will do me the justice to forward the original 'letter' without delay, to the office of *The Courier*, where the handwriting may be subjected to such a scrutiny, as may lead to a detection of the author of the malicious falsifications which pervade it.

"As I am unacquainted with the name of *The Courier's* correspondent, who appears to be in your confidence, I take the liberty of enclosing an open letter addressed to him on the same subject, which I beg may be forwarded to him as soon as possible. I feel it necessary further to inform you, that I shall this day send a *manifold copy* of this communication to *The Morning Post* for publication.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

"EDWARD BELL STEPHENS."

"To Lieut. General Evans, San Sebastian."

*Note by the Editor.*—To this Letter no reply ever arrived.

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3.

"Bayonne, Jan. 21.

"SIR—A letter appeared in *The Courier* newspaper of the 13th instant from a correspondent at San Sebastian, dated January 5, and commencing

—‘I have the pleasure of sending you the copy of a letter intercepted and delivered to Lieut.-General Evans to-day. The writer, who signs himself E. B. Stephens, is’ &c.

“I beg leave to inform you that I have written to London to publicly characterise the ‘copy of the letter alluded to as being in all its essential parts, personal and political, a calumnious forgery—the stock-jobbing perpetrator of which deserves to be expelled for ever from the society of gentlemen,’ and have dared its publishers to produce the original.

“I now write to afford you an opportunity of publicly explaining your conduct in this transaction, and have only further to say that this letter will be published.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

“EDWARD BELL STEPHENS.”

‘To the correspondent of *The Courier* at San Sebastian.’

*Note by the Editor.*—This letter also remained unanswered.

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4.

“Bayonne, Friday, Jan. 20.

“MY DEAR LORD RANELAGH,—I beg leave to enclose you *The Morning Chronicle* of the 14th inst., just arrived, in which I find a letter attributed to me, dated ‘Durango, Tuesday, Dec. 27,’ contain-

ing an extraordinary *mélange* of truth and falsehood, evidently concocted by some very ungentleman-like enemy of the cause you have so warmly espoused, and whose envy would gladly veil your Lordship's gallant conduct by an attempt at ridicule, surreptitiously introduced into a stolen private letter of mine. I sincerely hope that your Lordship will believe me incapable even of conceiving the tissue of absurdity which the forgery embodies, and that you will continue to do me the justice to regard me as one who can admire and applaud the disinterested bravery that devotes itself to the maintainance of a principle, untainted by the bad taste and worse feeling that could urge to its destruction.

"I have the honour to remain your Lordship's  
sincere admirer and very obedient servant,

"EDWARD B. STEPHENS."

"Viscount Ranelagh, Hotel St. Etienne."

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5.

The following is his Lordship's reply:—

"Bayonne, Jan. 21, 1837.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have just received your note, with the copy of *The Morning Chronicle* of the 14th, containing a supposed intercepted letter of your's. I only regret that you should have thought it worth your while to assure me it was fabricated, for, from

its blunders and fabulous absurdities, I knew at once it was a 'weak invention of the enemy.' I only hope, for the sake of the reading public, that the imaginative portion of the article descriptive of my progress, afforded them the same amusement that it has done myself; for, to say the least, it has the merit of being well got up, and, I have no doubt, succeeded for the moment in forwarding any stock-jobbing scheme the writer had in view. However, the laughable part concerning my *Louis Quatorze* dressing-gown, as exhibited in my flight, is somewhat too palpably contradictory of the statement of my being with the troops at Luchana, fighting 'like a devil;' not to mention the incongruity of braving in such a costume as bitter a night of snow and sleet as can be imagined. As for the *wigs*, they must have been purely ideal, or imported from Westminster, as there does not exist such a *materiel* in the Carlist army. However, to speak seriously, I much regret, but am not in the least surprised, to find that the Radical journals should have first attacked you for having published a private letter (which I know to be false), and on this pretext, have given to the world as authentic, a letter in the strictest sense private, embellished and falsified to suit their own views.

"As for the *faccioso* apparel, which I brought to the siege of Bilbao, and which I retain with espe-

cial care (although claimed by *The Courier's* Correspondent as being in the possession of General Evans), I have no doubt it would be a very valuable acquisition in San Sebastian ; but, as you well know, I was the only Englishman besides yourself who succeeded in preserving his little baggage, with the exception of three military books that I had not placed in the small portmanteau behind my saddle. I have particularly to regret the loss of one on the Art of making War, which, I doubt not, will be in the highest degree acceptable to the Lieutenant-General, and in all probability will be deemed an adequate substitute for those he lost at Fuentarabia.

“ With regard to the ‘immense *materiel*’ of perfumery which I am alleged to have lost, I believe a similar mistake was committed when Colonel Wylde enumerated Espartero’s cannon as part of the spoils taken from the Carlists.

“ Most truly yours,

“ RANELAGH.”

“ To E. B. Stephens, Esq.”

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The following letter from a highly respectable English gentleman, whose name appears garbled in the *Courier's* publication, also throws an interesting light on the subject.—

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING CHRONICLE.

"SIR—A letter, purporting to be the genuine copy of one from Mr. E. B. Stephens, correspondent of *The Morning Post*, having been published in *The Courier* of the 13th ult., and thence transferred to your columns, I trust that, inasmuch as it contains several falsehoods and inuendoes against certain English gentlemen serving as volunteers in the army of Don Carlos, you will, in the spirit of fairness, give insertion to a few observations upon the real facts of the case, which I consider myself fully competent to make, having had personal evidence of nearly every circumstance attending the siege and relief of Bilbao. So evident to me is the existence of interpolation and forgery in that supposititious document, that it would not be worth serious refutation, were it not for the purpose of placing the public upon their guard against similar reports from the same quarter.

"That Mr. Stephens did write a letter to Mr. Mitchell, and that it was surreptitiously obtained, is undoubtedly true; but that such a description, wholly inconsistent with truth, of scenes in which he, as well as myself and the other English volunteers, bore a personal part, is at once out of the question. I shall leave to others to comment upon the purloining and publication of private



letters; but I cannot help expressing surprise that a journal, calling itself respectable, could have contaminated itself with the admission of an article manifestly intended for the furtherance of some paltry stock-jobbing scheme.

“To point out one fabrication amongst the many contained in this letter, I will refer to that portion of it which represents Lord Ranelagh as aroused from his bed on the morning of the 25th, by the unexpected entrance of Espartero’s army, and seeking a precipitate flight *on foot*, arrayed in a brocaded dressing-gown, and thankful to escape with the loss of an immense quantity of baggage, which, containing every adjunct of the toilette, whether useful or ornamental, was left a prey to the enemy. It is somewhat singular, by the way, that this (according to *The Courier’s* description) very valuable materiel, should have entirely escaped my observation, considering that I was constantly with Lord Ranelagh, and knew what he was in the habit of carrying with him almost as well as what constituted my own equipment; and I can safely take upon myself to say, that I never saw anything more in his possession than the few indispensable conveniences usually carried about with him by every English officer, and which might be (as indeed was Lord Ranelagh’s custom), easily contained in the small valise in use amongst the

English cavalry. So much for the nature and value of this baggage. Now for the fact of its having fallen into the hands of the Christinos. It is unfortunate for the veracious compiler of *The Courier's* letter, that the only English who succeeded in preserving their baggage were Lord Ranelagh and Mr. Stephens. His Lordship, after returning to Olaveaga, after the affair of Luchana, sent a message to other English gentlemen to hold themselves in preparation for a retreat, and placing behind him on his horse the small dragoon valise, or knapsack, containing all his baggage, proceeded leisurely to join the staff of General Eguia.

“ Mr. Stephens, who got Lord Ranelagh's message (the only one who did so), succeeded also in securing his effects; but the other English, viz. Colonel Butts, his son, Captain Fitzthomas, and myself, knew nothing of the extent of the danger until midnight, when, perceiving the fire of musketry becoming gradually nearer and more distinct, we determined to ascend the hill of las Banderas, to learn precisely how matters stood, leaving our baggage in the quarters of Colonel Butts, in the full expectation of being able to return in time to reclaim it. On arriving at the heights, the first persons we encountered were Lord Ranelagh and Mr. Stephens, with whom, after remaining for some

time spectators of the conflict on Monte de Cabras, we proceeded to a neighbouring house, occupied by General Eguia's staff. We (that is, the English party) were the last to quit this building, which in a very few minutes afterwards was taken and burnt by the enemy.

"I have given you above a true and, as far as it goes, an accurate statement of facts, and, although I must apologise for addressing you so much at length, I think it but an act of public duty to come forward in protestation against the unworthy and dishonourable principle set forth by the publication of the letter in *The Courier* of the 13th, viz., that for the advancement of some crooked political purpose or a financial speculation, the confidence of private letters shall be invaded, and their contents given to the world in an interpolated or distorted form.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your very obedient servant,

"S. M. HUMPHREYS."

"Irun, Jan. 21, 1837."

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*The Courier* absolutely refused to investigate the forgery, or afford any explanation of the matter; saying,—“Whether there have been interpolation or not, we are wholly innocent of any such offence.

As we received the letter so we published it; and on our Correspondent's truth and good faith we place a most firm reliance. There is no occasion for us to interfere, as Mr. Stephens and *The Post* recommend, to procure from him his original letter from San Sebastian, as he has written both to our Correspondent and General Evans, and we have no doubt they will give him a proper answer, and take proper care of the letter." However, neither their Correspondent nor General Evans ever ventured either to produce the original letter, or to explain the means by which its falsification was forwarded to London for publication. The subject however attracted considerable attention in the Basque provinces, and the following explanation appeared in a letter from the Correspondent of *The Morning Post* at San Sebastian, dated the 11th of April, 1837:—"Having been informed of some circumstances connected with the forgery of the letter of your late correspondent in the Basque provinces, which was published by the *Courier*, I think it my duty to communicate the facts, as they have been told to me on what I consider to be unquestionable authority. The original letter, in conjunction with other letters, was brought into Bayonne by a Carlist courier, and by accident fell into the hands of the Sous-Prefet. The latter gave the correspondence to the Christino Consul, who forwarded it

would nought avail, as M'Cabe threatened publicly to insult him, he at length gave a meeting, and the result was such as I have mentioned. With the exception of requiring a new set of teeth and being confined to his room for three weeks or a month, no worse consequences are apprehended."

## CHAPTER XI.

IN the Basque Provinces and Navarre the women play a very active and influential part. They may be seen engaged in field operations, digging as sturdily as the men, bearing the harvest home in heavy burthens, or carrying it to market; again, managing boats on the rivers with surprising strength and dexterity, or driving provision or ammunition carts under a cannonade with a degree of equanimity that indicates a long familiarity with the perils of civil warfare. They do not, indeed, carry arms, but they know the use of them right well, and are not at all put out of their way by the introduction of such furniture into their kitchens and chambers, or the necessity of "receiving a company" (sixty men), night after night, who strew every room in the house with their muskets, bayonets, and cañanas, and leave them not room enough to whip their cat. When Espartero's troops lately

came plundering along the rich vale of Azua, some half-dozen Christinos who ventured into a *casario* a little in advance, found only the good wife at home who, pretending to be very much alarmed, did not cause them much concern in return. On a sudden she ran out, locked them up, summoned assistance, and, returning ere they could find means to escape took them all prisoners! I saw another whose cow had strayed on the road side near the Church of Begoña, during Villarreal's siege of Bilbao, and who fearlessly went to drive it back. The Urbanos in the church tower deliberately fired, and shot her down. She lived, however; was carried to the hospital at Derio, despite the continued efforts of the sharpshooters,—and to the surprise of many, recovered from the effect of the ball which had passed right through her body. That shot has done the Christinos no good. She “will remember it to them!” So will all her kith and kin to the fifteenth remove in the mountains of Asturias and Catalonia. Spaniards, male and female, have excellent memories for such matters. The latter have, in addition, the gift of language, which acts as a formidable recruiting agent in whatever cause it bestirs itself. But the enthusiasm of the Basque women in the cause of Don Carlos does not confine itself to words. It breaks out in acts on every opportunity. On his visit to the fortress of Guebara

in September last, when all the artilleros were in joyous activity to acknowledge the honour in their own way, a Captain's wife was on the castle platform, the most vivacious of all. She seized a port-fire, swung it manfully, stood to her gun (the largest she could find in the fortress), and fired salute after salute as long as they would prime and load for her; in fact, till the King entered and made his bow to her ladyship. They are ready for any thing in the way of contest, either in mirth or earnest; cannonade, *culada*, *bolero*, or snowballs. I saw two young officers fairly pelted off the field during the Christmas holidays, by a couple of hardy Durango lasses, who evinced a surprising knack of making and flinging two for their one, of hitting hard, and receiving soft. The *Señores oficiales* did their best; but the girls' heads were down and away as quick as thought, and it was impossible to make an impression on them elsewhere.

Exposure to sun and air, without any shade to their features, gives all the elderly female peasants the appearance of being one flesh with the male, both being thoroughly tanned; but the younger ones, who are not so much exposed, present occasionally complexions of a ruddy bloom, that would attract admiration even in England; features finely chiselled, of a singular nobleness and delicacy (especially in that wild valley, encircled by leagues of



mountains, containing Ascoytia, Aspetia, and the splendid church of Loyala), with dark eyes of a power rarely to be found in our northern latitudes, and which appear to owe much of their singular force, to the contrast afforded by the habitual repose of the other features. In some countenances, this strange diversity of expression produces an effect more startling than agreeable. The lower part of the face may be fixed and pallid; in short, half dead; while the eyes are mobile and brilliant, as if something more than alive! I cannot explain the cause, not understanding the physiology of the matter. However, the Basque sculptors and carvers study the effect to good purpose, and all their churches present the *Madona* and the favourite *Santa* of the place as veritable Basque beauties of the highest grade; the pouting lips (which, when they *do* smile, present a *copia* of graceful meanings with a varying power of expression that must be seen to be appreciated) forming the most distinctive characteristic. A French woman can smile with her shoulders, eyebrows and teeth, without the aid of lips, but the beautiful Basque *paysana* can do infinitely more by the mere relaxation of hers, and speakingly portray all the phases of amiability and intelligence without opening her mouth. There is no affectation in the matter; it is pure power. The ecclesiastical sculptors evidently regard it as a

heavenly endowment, and reclaim as much of its divine expression for the cherubs and archangels as their imitative ability can compass, without distinction of sex. The traveller need not therefore, be surprised to find a very strong family likeness in the countenances of Santos Miguel, Rafael Gabriel, &c., for on analysing the matter, he will discover that they are all wrought on the model of the graceful feminine features of Biscay and Guipuscoa. Their effigies are either gilt, in the old tawdry toy style, or painted "as natural as life," or, more accurately speaking, "as death;" with the full, staring, black, unearthly eye, (the discordant living effect of which I have already remarked), which chills the startled spectator with all the horrors of the wax works. Another displeasing contrast in the natural relations of "the female form divine" in these provinces, is that which the arms, hands and face so frequently present. While the latter may be gazed upon as an assemblage of

—"all that's best of dark and bright,"

the former may be perceived to be very effective implements for the condensation and evolution of snow-balls, as aforesaid. It can't well be otherwise. Early toil and exposure to all varieties of weather and occupations, soon develop flexors and extensors, till the palms and digits expand on a scale of com-

prehensiveness strikingly at variance with an English estimate of fair proportions. I would advise travellers therefore to rest content with that lovely work of nature, the face ; the hands are mere Brummagem articles, and have no pretensions to a place even amongst the fine arts. Passing across the Bidassoa ferry from Irun to Behobie I found "the daughter of the boat" quite as efficient as any of our *barkeros*. Wherever a push was the one thing needful, she jumped in and out upon the shallows like an amphibious animal; and again, she pulled her share of the rope along shore like a horse, to enable us to make head against the rapids. Out of gratitude for her exertions I shall say nothing about her arms; hands and feet, but I must own that I have not since beheld a brighter black eye, a more brilliant complexion, or so animated and attractive an expression of countenance.

The Basque children take to the water very early, and seem to enjoy it all life long. During the last siege of Bilbao, while the heavy rains interfered with all artillery movements on the hills—the battalions quartered at Olaveaga were in their element, boating on the river, singing, shouting and splashing each other to their hearts' content. The *barkeros* were to be pitied—their craft being in constant danger, and themselves allowed no voice in the matter, for the *soldados* claimed the

privilege of going ferry-free and drowning themselves if they pleased. I once stood for half an hour to behold the result of a pleasure trip of this kind, between Luchana and the Baya of Soroza. Twenty merry Navarrese jumped into a little ferry bark to cross to the Convent of Burseña, but had scarcely pushed off, when they began to rock the boat and to ship seas. The *barkero's* two children, a boy and girl of about eight and nine years old, had clung to the boat like leeches, to save it from injury if possible; and the effect of the danger on them, afforded the waggish crew additional amusement. The boy at the bow cried lustily with fear and vexation at the expected loss of his father's boat, while the girl at the stern beat the *soldados* vengefully with a rope's end. One at last fell over with laughter, and pulled two others in along with him. These held on by the gunwale to save themselves the trouble of swimming, and as they all pressed upon one side, the girl, whose soul seemed to be absorbed in the preservation of the boat, laid on them heavily with the rope; all the time cursing and scolding (in Spanish it is all one) in their very teeth, like a trooper. This was the height of fun for the *muchachos* within. They screamed and reeled with delight, till at length four or five of them rolled out at the other side. This restored something like a balance of power

and elbow room for operations. Their *cañanas* were ashore, so they defied all the powers of water. The ins made common cause against the outs, splashing and ducking them as they came within reach. The latter joined forces to assault and upset the boat, and if they had had a good Admiral amongst them would certainly have effected either the capsize or capture; but assaulting the bark, as the winds and waves did that which contained Cæsar and his fortunes, at all sides (*vide* Lucan), they just managed to counteract each other most hydrostatically, till the boy brought the boat ashore. Then the tug of war took place. Several scientific duck-wrestling matches came off the gunwale. 'Twas a point of honour with all the outs that the ins should join their party. The girl helped to heave the last stickler-for-place overboard, and then manfully pushed out alone to the centre of the river, where she set at nought threats, prayers and promises. She had fought for her father's boat, won it, and kept it too.

It was said that the Basque mountains would be likely to be crowded this season with British visitors who were preparing to steal a march over the Pyrenees to look at the interesting and extraordinary country beyond. Doubtless the gallant example set by Captain Henningsen, Lord Ranelagh, Count de Mortara, and others has

raised an emulous spirit that will not subside on the mere exorcism of Lord Palmerston, or the well-understood threat of "being practically interfered with" by his political friends the Spanish bondholders. Indeed, since the latter have taken to "intercepting" and forging private correspondence, and their coadjutors the French police have taken to persecuting English travellers on their way to and from the frontier, I have every hope that the proud sturdy spirit of independence and love of fair play which characterises John Bull will develop itself to some purpose, and lead to a re-action that may yet save the honour and interests of England from being wrecked on the shores of Biscay. In the meantime I am honoured with inquiries—"What preparations are to be made for travelling there?"—"Is it difficult to learn Basquense?"—And, lastly (I quote from the MS.)—"You don't mean to say seriously, there is any particular danger in making a tour of the provinces?"

First,—*it is* rather difficult to learn Basquense, inasmuch as the grammar is very defective, and it is spoken differently, not only in the several provinces, but in various parts of the same province; and I was assured that those who live at a distance can scarcely understand each other when they meet. There are several interesting speculations attaching to the remains of the Basque

language, such as it is, and its affinities to other languages, that must wait for a more favourable opportunity of comparison than I at present possess. In the meantime I am happy to state, for the comfort of travellers, that nearly all the peasantry speak Spanish also, and that with it alone, a stranger can manage to make himself understood almost everywhere. There are exceptions however. In the head Posada of Hernani, where I dined, there was a beautiful girl who waited at table, that did not understand the best native Spanish of my companions. There they sat, each like Owen Glendower, calling for spirits, but none did come! Now, as to the other point, "*particular danger?*"—*that* lies beyond my skill to answer satisfactorily. Much depends upon the talent of the traveller in finding or making it for himself as he goes along, especially if he moves with a camp. Some philosophers say that it is all ideal—others, that it is something real, and, more than that, inevitable—others, that there is a concatenation of powder, ball, wadding and range, which, whatever be the opinion of the honourable gentleman opposite—but I hate such knock-em-down arguments, and won't stand powder-monkey to any philosopher. Permit me instead, to offer a few suggestions, the result of my own experience in the provinces, and to wind up my narrative with a

chapter of advice, which, that it may have the greater chance of making a useful impression, I beg leave to address to the gentle reader personally.

In the first place, then, my dear fellow-countryman, don't think of seeing the country with a telescope from the walls of Bilbao or San Sebastian. The hills around stand sadly in the way, and the Columnar hunting parties indulged in by the garrison, which might have afforded opportunities for a wider scope of vision, are now few and far between. Besides, these excursions have invariably had unlucky terminations. "'Tis very pleasant," says the East Indian adage, "to hunt the tiger; but it is quite another affair when the tiger turns to hunt you!" It is, indeed, peculiarly mortifying to go for wool and to return shorn; so, try another plan. Throw aside your night-gown and slippers; abandon all your lingering hopes of travellers' comforts with a good grace; make your will; insure your life; find your way in the dark over the Pyrenees to Vera or Zugaramurdi; and then, having got at once into the midst of danger and hardship, you will soon learn to appreciate a thousand enjoyments that before passed unnoticed or despised. You will find your sense of natural piety quickened and elevated, and your tongue often uttering unconscious graces "for a good



dinner," or "a good bed," as the case may be, although the former should happen to be only bread and oil pottage, and the latter a mattress; *à propos* of dietetics, always take your breakfast, dinner, and supper, *when you can get them*—and your sleep (if possible) in advance! I am supposing that you are travelling with the Carlist forces, otherwise you will lose all the pleasure of beholding battles and sieges, the excitement of marching and counter-marching, of surprising and being surprised. Travelling alone, you will only see the towns, rivers, woods and mountains *asleep* as it were, and you might as well be looking at a book of landscapes at home; but if you follow the course of the war on any part of the frontier, you will find all these alive and alert: you will see the yards manned as it were,—every stick, stone and stream arranging themselves in sympathetic unison, and assuming their boldest defensive attitude, as if inspired by the unconquerable spirit of the people who have defended them ere history began.

But I was talking about your dinner and your bed.—Fight your way at once into the midst of the oil and garlic, devour them in token of victory over your own fastidiousness, and you will sit at your ease ever after. Get rid, also, of your childish predilection for white salt; the brown is quite as wholesome. It is only tinged

by a little clay dug out of the mine with it—or locked up in its crystallization from the well waters of Salinas del Oro. A little practice soon enables you to distinguish it from the pepper. The only danger of your indulging in Spanish cookery is, that you will soon become an epicure, and on your return to France astonish the *garçons*, as an English friend of mine did at Bayonne, by calling for salad oil “a little older” than that which stood in the cruet. Then as to a bed—I can promise you that you will not be likely to complain on your return to England of “a rose leaf doubled under your great toe” troubling your repose. However, if you are constitutionally fastidious (or thin-skinned, as the saying is) on this point, you cannot do better than get yourself varnished or enamelled for the season, as Madame V—— does, and then you may bid defiance to anything less irritating than a musket-ball. The late Sir Charles Giesecke adopted another excellent plan on his mineralogical excursions in Greenland. He provided a large white tanned bearskin, thick and strong, sewed into a bag, with a flap which covered his head. He crept in at the mouth every night, rolled himself round in a blanket, shut the flap door, and thus lay secure against the attacks of dogs, wolves, rats, mice, &c., the skin being tough enough to withstand an extemporaneous siege, till he awoke to beat the drum

with his knuckles, or shake his sides and growl at his disturbers. However, the less comforts you carry, the more good your journey will do you ; so don't trouble yourself about the bearskin. Indeed the less you bring in the way of baggage, the less you have to lose ; as you certainly will, one time or other, all that you can't carry on your own back.

Don't depend on your good horse for aid in time of need. He has not been used to a maize diet, and you will be obliged to send him back to France to save his life ; paying a Napoleon transit-duty by the way. Don't expect to replace him in the provinces. Every horse at all able to carry a man-at-arms, has been purchased for the army, or received in lieu of service or contributions from the owners ; so that only ponies remain, one of which at a pinch may serve you, if like the sailors in a storm, you lighten the vessel by throwing the cargo to the sharks. If indeed you can get a good mule and will feed it yourself (by stripping a house of its thatch, if nothing else can be had,) you may sit at ease in this respect. Take no care of your bridle or your neck. Carry saddle-bags, and put provision for to-day and to-morrow therein, otherwise you may both frequently dine on recollections of the previous meal. The actual necessities which you must bring with you are, a razor, a piece of soap, a comb, a tooth-brush, a square inch of

looking-glass (you will find white towels and napkins in the poorest huts, but they wash them with the ley of wood ashes,) a pair of spurs, (hinged, to enable you to walk down the precipitous roads without turning your face and toes thereunto,) a knife, fork and soup spoon, clasping in one haft, (a "scarce edition" in the provinces). I allow you a separate small spoon for eggs, as the customary hard-boiling plan which requires none, might not agree with your health. In your knapsack a second shirt, &c., and high shoes—not boots. You can't attempt to change wet boots in camp without the liability of being taken prisoner. A young friend of mine, who was roused out of bed at Olaveaga on Christmas morning, by the Christinos galloping under his window, was obliged to abandon both the operation and the boots, and afterwards to march for three leagues through the snow, over the sharp rocky mountains in his bare feet; all for want of shoes instead of boots. Next, a pocket map, telescope, note-book, and pencil; lastly, two articles which you may find difficult to procure when you want them, and which are very light and portable:—English lint and an empty phial. N.B. The latter will hold the lint; and don't forget the cork! The lint will be very useful whenever you are wounded. I assure you that many arms and legs are dressed without any in the hospitals, and you

will find none to spare in the provinces for amateurs. The phial is to be taken to the *Botica* for medicine as soon as the *Chacoli* (the wine of Biscay) disagrees with you. I at last learned to use it at dinner, as others did,—as wine with water, and vinegar with fish.—You need not take the trouble of bringing out medicine; you can always purchase it—excellent I assure you (the less the better;) but the *Boticario* is a man of dignity, and feels it beneath him to peddle in pill boxes and phials; so if you don't bring wherewith to hold his prescription, you may carry it home in the hollow of your hand, or in your mouth if you are not afraid of the consequences. Pray don't forget the cork!

Never enter a *Posada* except as a matter of necessity. Their Patrons are a *caste* of rogues and robbers in Spain as well as everywhere else; so the only safe plan to pursue, when the rascal presents his bill at you, and desires you to stand and deliver,—is, without looking at it, to seize him by the throat and drag him before the *Alcalde*, confident that he will find something enormously overcharged in it. If the fellow be insolent,—the *Alcalde* if he happen to be in a good humour, may order him a dozen *palos* on the back to teach him manners, and to keep his accounts on a better system. In justice to the Basque womankind I must say that I always found the *posadas* wherein

they held sway less exorbitant than those ruled by the other sex.

Dispense with the attendance of an *Assistente* unless you are very much occupied, very helpless, or very ignorant of Spanish and Basquense. There are times when you will wish him hanged; for instance, finding *par hazard* agreeable society where you flatter yourself you would be heartily welcome alone, and he is one too many; or, just when you have made yourself at home of a stormy night in some hospitable house on the mountains, amongst a kind and simple family, where everything promises comfort and sociality—you find gloomy silence on a sudden take place of song and laughter. Your hopeful *Assistente* has alluded to you as "*Señor Ingles*," and you can hear them telling him in a whisper, how the patron's son, and his own brother, and the patrona's kinsman were all slaughtered by the *Inglese*s at San Sebastian, and Arlaban, and Hernani! and how their three houses were plundered and wantonly set fire to—until you are on the point of going to take your night's lodging on the bare hill side for very shame at finding yourself classed in idea amongst a Legion of cut-throats—*Peseteros*, *Hombres comprados*, *Ladrones*, *Robadores*, *Borachios*, *Falsos*, &c. In such a predicament don't attempt any explanation; the case won't bear it. An independent primitive

people, with a constitution at least as good, and free and ancient as your own—as distinct in laws and language, character, form, pursuits and national feeling, from Spain, as Spain is from England,—are invaded by a horde of modern Norsemen, who, adding hypocrisy to systematic barbarity, capture or destroy all within their reach, in the name of liberty, and reform. The less said on the subject the better. Call yourself *Irlandés* or *Escocés*, Welshman, Manxman or Yorkshireman, as the case may be (I can't tell you the Spanish for the latter), but while the recent affairs of Bilbao, Irun and Hernani are rankling in their minds, do not go a pleasuring amongst them bearing the name of murderer on your forehead.

But I was speaking about your native *Assistente*. A good one in the ranks is really useful while you travel with the camp, in two respects. He will have your dinner ready to a moment, even if he pull down the door-post for fuel; and at night he will have the first Basque whisper of the enemy's movements, (sometimes before it reaches the General),—will have yourself out of bed, your things packed up, your horse at the door, and all ready to march in five minutes after; otherwise your first intimation of the matter may be a *reveille* of musket balls through the chamber window, or the sight of the roof in flames. Not being able to find such a

treasure unengrossed, I did without one, depending on myself; and, certainly, underwent a very improving course of practice. Henceforward there will be still less likelihood of your finding a "help-meet" for such emergencies, as the Infante Don Sebastian has very wisely ordered that every *Asistente* able to bear arms, attached to civilians or to officers out of the camp,—shall instantly fall into the ranks and do duty on active service. Your cookery, &c., will therefore be left to the aged, the wounded, or the women; an excellent arrangement, by which Don Sebastian must have strengthened his army considerably, seeing that a number of the most active and intelligent men, hitherto selected by the idle *Señores oficiales* as lookers-on, have been brought up as a reinforcement to play the game on their own account; thus favouritism has been discountenanced, the ranks filled up, and a strong front presented to the enemy.

One more word of advice on the very important subject—your wardrobe. Your hat will be crushed to black lint in the pocket of the guide, as he crosses the frontier with you. Make a present of it to the nearest hospital, if you have a white supply of your own, and mount a *Boyna* instead—red, white, or blue (the red is the most military). Your surtout coat will wear out; but don't think of replacing it by Spanish cloth. This will shrink and



shrink, and shrink, till you can't get into it, however large it may be formed at first. The English cloth will yield you more comfort while one shred holds to another. When a general breaking up of its constitution is apparent, purchase either a long and broad cloak of coarse plaid carpet, which you can use as a blanket at night and a horse cloth by day; or, better still, (especially if you have no horse to share a blanket with) a *Zamarra* jacket, loose and full, formed of the curly Astracan lamb-skin reared in Andalusia, a year old, the black wool outside, and lined with white skin of similar age throughout. Nothing on earth is at once so comfortable and so serviceable. You cannot feel the cold of winter through it. It defies wind, rain, and snow. You may get a day's wetting in it; and, having shaken it well, may let it dry on your back with as little danger of taking cold as if you were a black ram. At night, if you are short of bed-clothes, it will fairly form the upper half. In summer you may throw it open or aside, hussar fashion, all day (unless the heat is too intense, and you find it useful to retain it, like an Irish surtout, to prevent being scorched); but the moment of sun-down, when the dew begins to let fall its malarian influences, fever, ague or rheumatism (you don't know which), on your chilled shoulders,—“Then, then is the moment” ('tis a theme for Tom

Moore) when you will turn once more, with all the ardour of a truant and repentant lover, to find refuge and consolation in the genial snow-white and ever-inviting arms of your neglected yet unoffending and unoffended *Zamarra*. If you can get one made for yourself, order it of a spencer length, and thus, whether riding, driving or walking, its beneficent protection will be extended even to your hips. Skirts are impracticable, but the spencer *Zamarra* is all-sufficient and imperishable. Even after *you* are worn out, it will make a serviceable knapsack for your executioners and assigns.

Now to descend and conclude. I perceive you regarding your perishables by anticipation? Well! let them wear out also. Patience, hear me out, if you please! I’ve a system. Trust not the Spanish loom, and increase not your baggage unnecessarily. Stand by British manufacture as long as possible, and when you can conscientiously take upon you to say that symptoms of approaching dissolution are perceptible, hasten to the leather-dressers, and purchase two skins of Cordovan: then take a tailor (prisoner, if necessary) home to your lodgings; get into bed, and make him sit down on a chair beside you—(Spanish tailors can sit) and arm your garment high and low, front and rear, *à la caballero*, at every assailable point and angle, before he leaves the chair. It will then be “better

than new;" and except you fall in for share of a shower of grape shot, you will be independent of the *Sastre* for three years, or thereabouts. Surmounted by your *Zamarra* and *Boyna*, you will form a proper *Faccioso* figure, presentable at court, in camp, on Prado, and also (if you feel equal to the undertaking) at the "national and characteristic" village ball on Sunday evenings, when hundreds join hands for the *Culada*. Seeing you thus attired and occupied, the kind-hearted people will soon forget that you belong to the race of northern barbarians who infest their coasts, and ere long, will learn to look on you as one of themselves:—not equal in blood, of course (for who can vie in ancestral and heraldic honours with the peasantry of Biscay?)—but as a person who has good taste and good sense enough to come and be happy amongst them, and learn a Basque lesson how to fight for his King and Country.

## APPENDIX.

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(A.)

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LORD RANELAGH  
AND LORD JOHN HAY.

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LORD RANELAGH TO LORD JOHN HAY.

*Bayonne, Jan. 15, 1837.*

MY LORD,—On my arrival in this town yesterday, I was credibly informed that your Lordship had expressed yourself in very forcible terms against me for the part I am supposed to have taken against the forces of his Britannic Majesty, whilst with General Eguia at the siege of Bilbao. I should not presume to write to your Lordship respecting a rumour having no foundation in fact, and evidently originating in mistake, but that the mere mention of such a charge is of too serious a nature to be passed over without refutation. Report says your Lordship has been informed and impressed with the

belief that I have been seen in a Carlist battery, which is said to have fired against his Britannic Majesty's ships. I can assure your Lordship that, during the late siege of Bilbao, most positive orders were given by the Infante Don Sebastian, that under no circumstances whatever should they be fired upon. I am confident that had the crews of the British men-of-war wished to come peaceably ashore, as they were in the habit of doing during the first siege, they would have experienced as much attention and kindness as they then did at the hands of Zumalacarregui. I have since heard with regret, that one or two shots, fired by a twenty-four pounder, which was advanced to the old powder magazine near the bridge of Luchana, on the 23rd of December, to bear on Fort Desierto and the Spanish gun-boats, accidentally struck his Britannic Majesty's brig *Saracen*. This mischance would, in all probability, not have occurred, had General Eguia considered it safe, or indeed possible, to send a message to the British Commander, to request the removal of his vessel; remembering, as he did, the reckless barbarity exhibited some days previously towards an officer of his, who was shot from the walls of Bilbao while bearing a flag of truce, with an answer to the British Consul there. I presume that this battery (the only one which could actually bear upon the position under Fort

Desierto, where the British vessel lay) is the particular one in which it was supposed that I had been seen at such a time. Now, I beg to inform your Lordship, I was never in that battery while it was firing at Fort Desierto, or at the Spanish shipping in the anchorage below. I must add, that viewing as I did the retired and quiescent positions which his Britannic Majesty's vessels maintained throughout, I, up to the hour of the decisive attack on Luchana and Monte de Cabras, never contemplated the probability of their acting under the orders of General Espartero, and in consequence was, together with other Englishmen, nearly brought into collision with them on the night of the 24th ult. Indeed it was not until yesterday that I was made acquainted with the fact that his Britannic Majesty's Naval force had taken an active part on that occasion; and I can confidently state that the whole Carlist camp was equally destitute of any certain information of the actual co-operation either of his Britannic Majesty's forces or those of the Legion from San Sebastian. The feelings and principles which have led me to volunteer my humble but zealous support in the cause of Don Carlos and the persecuted Basque peasantry (the cause at once of legitimate monarchy and constitutional rights) are, I trust, of a true English stamp; and, acting on them as I did, unfettered by professional service,

unmoved by the vindictive feelings of a civil strife, or by the mercenary considerations which have urged a crowd of reckless adventurers to stain the shores of Guipuscoa with the blood of its brave inhabitants, I had hoped that I had thereby given a sufficient guarantee in the eyes of every candid and fair-judging Englishman, that I was not likely to be found ranging myself under the banners of revolution and anarchy, treason or spoliation, in any country ; still less of wilfully incurring the deep dishonour of defying the flag of my own sovereign. Seriously misrepresented as I now find my conduct has been, I may take the liberty of reminding your Lordship, that since my arrival in Biscay I have not been unmindful of the interests and honour of England, and that my first act was to appeal to the good feelings of Don Carlos on behalf of the rights of humanity, and to obtain from him the truly gratifying concession that the Durango decree should be abrogated so far as it concerned my country, and that the British cockade should be inviolably respected—a concession which I had the honour to transmit to your Lordship's immediate notice, through Captain Maitland, of his Britannic Majesty's ship *Tweed*. Then, and not till then, I freely and unconditionally lent my humble aid in the field on several occasions, against his revolted subjects—a liberty of action which I believe your Lordship will

not venture to assert is in anywise contrary to the laws of England, in relation to the two belligerent powers of Spain. However, not knowing the extent of the misrepresentations which may have been made to your Lordship, I can only say that if any further explanation appears necessary to your Lordship, I shall be happy to afford it, confident that on arriving at the truth, your Lordship will cheerfully do me the justice which I feel indispensable to my character as a soldier and a Briton.

I have the honour to remain your Lordship's obedient, humble servant,

RANELAGH.

To Lord John Hay, Commodore  
commanding, &c.

P.S. Since I wrote the above, I have learned that the inimical reports which others spread against me, having been unfortunately accredited by your Lordship, have acquired a degree of publicity which renders it necessary that I should as publicly protest against them. Your Lordship will, therefore please to consider your reply as a document which in the course of my own justification I may find it necessary to give to the world.

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LORD RANELAGH TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING POST, ENCLOSING THE CORRESPONDENCE FOR PUBLICATION.

Bayonne, Jan. 26.

SIR,—On reading over my letter of the 15th instant, I perceive that the following passage requires some further explanations, viz. “ Viewing as I did the retired and quiescent positions which his Britannic Majesty’s vessels maintained throughout, I up to the hour of the decisive attack on Luchana and Monte de Cabras, never contemplated the probability of their acting under the orders of General Espartero, and in consequence was, together with other Englishmen, nearly brought into collision with them on the night of the 24th ultimo.” This may perhaps appear at variance with the reports received in England of the active efforts of the combined forces to raise the siege of Bilbao; but really the very singular tactics adopted by his Britannic Majesty’s co-operative armament on the occasion, left the Carlists in perfect ignorance of what they had to expect from them. The plain facts are these: his Britannic Majesty’s brig *Ringdove* lay at anchor during the greater part of the siege in the Bilbao river, between Fort Desierto

and Portugalete, within half musket shot of the Carlists, where, had she been considered as an enemy, she could have been seriously injured, and perhaps destroyed. It was rumoured that she had fired three or four shots ashore ; and a great sensation was created in the Carlist camp at the idea of such a gratuitous outrage, during a state of virtual neutrality and mutual forbearance, where no provocation had been given ; but these shots were afterwards discovered to be nothing more than signals to steamers in the offing, and nothing of retaliation was attempted or thought of. His Britannic Majesty's brig *Saracen* lay further up the river, moored till the very last under Fort Desierto. This fort and the Spanish gun-boats were almost daily engaged with the Carlists, yet the *Saracen*, which lay in the midst of the latter, took no ostensible part in these contests, but (as it now appears) sent her crews to work the guns in the fort, whilst she herself continued to be quietly at anchor, apparently neutral and harmless. Had either vessel acted openly on the offensive the Carlists would have known with whom they had to deal, and I should have withdrawn to another part of the provinces. Their first undisguised act of hostility occurred in the decisive attack on the bridge of Luchana and Monte de Cabras ; yet even there escaped recognition, enveloped as they were in storm and dark-

ness, whilst surprising the all-confiding Carlists. General Villarreal's report of the affair, in which no mention whatever is made of the co-operation of British troops or vessels, will sufficiently substantiate the fact. I cannot conclude my letter without bearing testimony to the humanity of the brave Basque people, and to their forbearance under very severe provocation. So far from their mode of warfare being sanguinary or barbarous, as interested enemies, both Spanish and English, are constantly proclaiming, I can (as well as other Englishmen, spectators of their proceedings during the last campaign) vouch that it has been carried on upon a far more civilised system than the British public have hitherto been permitted to believe. Indeed, speaking from my own knowledge of all that occurred at the siege of Bilbao, I feel myself warranted in declaring that they (the Carlists) act upon much more humane principles than their opponents, who seemed to neglect no opportunity of indulging in outrage.

Yours obediently,

RANELAGH.

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## LORD JOHN HAY TO LORD RANELAGH.

His Majesty's Ship Phoenix, Passages,  
Jan. 25, 1837.

MY LORD,—In reference to your Lordship's letter of the 15th instant, I have to acquaint you that I received information that several British subjects, amongst whom your Lordship was named, were acting with the insurgent army during the late siege of Bilbao, and the operations on the banks of the Nervion. Those operations lasted several weeks, and during the whole of which period six vessels belonging to his Majesty's squadron, and many boats, with their flags always displayed, were actively and prominently employed in co-operating with her Catholic Majesty's forces against the insurgents, for the relief of Bilbao, and the protection of the persons and property of British subjects.

It therefore became my duty to direct the senior officer in command of his Majesty's ships stationed in that river to make every inquiry as to the authenticity of such reports; the result has been to prove that your Lordship took an active part in the attack on Bilbao, and the operations on that river.

As to any reports to which you allude of expressions having fallen from me, I will observe, that

all my observations have been founded on the above facts. Your Lordship is perfectly mistaken if you imagine that I have endeavoured to ascertain the particular battery or position in which your presence or exertions were employed. I never considered this a point of the least importance : my object was to ascertain correctly, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, what Englishmen (if any) were acting with the Pretender's troops when the British flag was co-operating with her Catholic Majesty's forces, leaving it to the British government to institute such proceedings as they may deem proper.

Captain Maitland informs me that no such communication has ever reached him as that alluded to in your letter respecting an alleged abrogation of a part of the Durango decree, nor is it of any consequence, as that barbarous document never appeared to me to direct the murder of those serving under the British flag who might have fallen into the hands of the Pretender's troops.

As your Lordship has thought fit to address to me in no very measured terms, certain remarks on the motives which you assume to have actuated the officers and men of the British Auxiliary Legion to enter the service of her Catholic Majesty, I have thought proper to forward a copy of your letter to the officer commanding that force.

I have been impelled by a sense of public duty to place before his Majesty's government the facts to which my letter refers. Such being the case, your Lordship will see the impossibility of my carrying on any correspondence on this subject beyond this statement, which puts your Lordship in possession of the official steps I have taken.

I am, my Lord, &c.,

(Signed)

JOHN HAY.

The Lord Ranelagh, &c., &c.

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NOTE by the EDITOR, 13th July, 1837.—It is only since the completion of this work, that I have been informed of a circumstance which throws an unexpected light on the difficulty expressed in Vol. I. page 131, with respect to what appeared to me the ante-date of the Royal order exempting the forces of his Britannic Majesty from the denunciations of the Durango decree. I have however lately been assured, (on authority which I cannot doubt) that the Royal British Marines were excepted from the penalties of the Durango Decree, (published the 10th of June 1835,)—by a Royal Order dated on the 15th of July 1836, at Villafranca (not Vil-

lareal) de Guipuscoa; which order was immediately communicated, not only to all the Carlist Generals and principal officers on the coast, but to all the diplomatic agents of Don Carlos abroad. However, it was not made public;—nay, it was, I am informed, communicated with the injunction that it should be kept secret, for two reasons:—1st, to prevent the beneficial preventive effects anticipated from the publication of the Durango Decree (the cessation of enlistment for the service of Isabella, in Great Britain and Ireland), being counteracted by a large shipment of Royal Marines instead of the obnoxious Legion:—2ndly, to avoid exciting the indignation which such an act of mercy (towards the troops of a nation taking a hostile part against a people who never injured them), would have aroused in the minds of the greater number of the partizans of Don Carlos.

The fact appears to be, that Don Carlos and his Minister were less anxious about acquiring the reputation of a merciful administration, than actually practising mercy as far as it could *safely* be conceded, amidst the excitements of the war of extermination waged against them.

It certainly seems somewhat singular, that Señor Erro should not have explained the actual state of the case to Lord Ranelagh in all their discussions on the principle and policy of the

Durango Decree as affecting all parties; during which the minor point of the claims of the British cockade might very naturally have been taken for granted by his Lordship, to be virtually involved in the greater.

Lord Ranelagh was (as well as myself) undoubtedly permitted to remain under the impression that *he* had obtained from Don Carlos "the truly gratifying concession that the Durango Decree should be abrogated so far as it concerned the British cockade,"—a misconception, the accountability for which certainly rests with Señor Erró, and arose, I can now well believe, from a mere *equivoque* in the partial explanations which the Minister was able to afford his Lordship, under the very "peculiar position" in which he stood with respect to the secret Royal Order.

Since my return to London, my attention having been particularly called to this point of Lord Ranelagh's letter, I made (in his Lordship's absence at Rome) all possible inquiries within the very limited time allowed me to complete this Appendix (after the first volume had gone to press), as to the causes of the mistake;—and have received the following explanation from authority on which I can place implicit reliance:—

"Lord Ranelagh, in October 1836, being at Durango, had some interviews with Señor Erró on the



subject of that Decree. In one, *at last*, the minister, who could not, according to his instructions, tell Lord Ranelagh the real fact of the existing order,—said to him in French:—‘*Eh bien ! quant à la cocarde Anglaise, nous avons pourvu : nous avons arrangé tout cela !*’ (Well ! As to the English cockade, we have provided about that. We have arranged all that !) These expressions conveyed to his Lordship the idea that it was owing to *his* exertions that those arrangements were made ; and as a loyal British subject he felt naturally proud of it ; while the minister was alluding with diplomatic skill to the existing order of the 15th July preceding.”

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The following highly illustrative letter from a gentleman who was present at the siege of Bilbao, was elicited by the late parliamentary debates which arose on the motion of Sir Henry Hardinge, Bart. on the 17th of April, 1837.

“That an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased not to renew the Order in Council of the 10th of June 1835, granting his Majesty’s royal license to British subjects to enlist into the service of the Queen of Spain, which order in Council will expire

on the 10th of June next; and praying also that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to give directions that the Marine forces of his Majesty shall not be employed in the civil contest now prevailing in Spain, otherwise than in that Naval co-operation which his Majesty has engaged to afford if necessary, under the stipulations of the treaty."

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING POST.

"SIR,—As the statement made officially by the Earl of Minto in the recent debate on Spanish affairs, that his Britannic Majesty's Naval forces acted openly as belligerents during the whole time of the siege of Bilbao, is calculated to fix the stigma of having borne arms against his national flag upon every Englishman who, like myself, may have been at that time serving with the Carlist army,—may I request the favour of a small space in your valuable columns for a few remarks upon the character of the operations in the River Nervion.

"It was observed by his Lordship on the occasion to which I have referred, that the inference drawn by the Duke of Wellington, from a letter of Lord Ranelagh, descriptive of the position of the British squadron at Bilbao, was by no means borne out; that he (Lord Minto) was glad of an opportunity of stating that the King's forces at Bilbao were acting

openly in co-operation with the Legion; that the Fort of Desierto was garrisoned by mariners, who were daily firing upon those Carlists who came within range of their guns; that the vessels in the river were daily exposed to the firing of the Carlists, as well as the boats of his Britannic Majesty's squadron, which, with their colours always displayed, were employed in keeping up the communications between Bilbao and the sea. That there was no truth whatever in the report that the British squadron took shelter under the character of neutrality; on the contrary, they appeared in the character of open belligerents, as they were.

“With regard to these observations of the noble Earl, allow me to say that his Lordship must either have taken a hastily-conceived and most incorrect view of the actual nature of the British operations in the river Nervion previously to the 24th of December, or else the official report upon which the above-mentioned statements were founded, was strangely at variance with fact, as far at least as could be ascertained through the most diligent and unremitting inquiries on the part of the English with the Carlist army, who naturally felt the deepest anxiety to avoid all collision with the forces of their Sovereign, by which I mean the Royal Marines and seamen; for such single and isolated artillerymen as were from time to time seen in the town of

Bilbao, at Portugalete, or elsewhere, were supposed to belong to General Evans's Legion, for we had not contemplated the employment of the British Royal Artillery under the terms of 'naval co-operation' stipulated in the Quadruple Treaty. I am, therefore, ready to come forward and give in the most solemn and unequivocal manner my corroboration of every statement in the letter of Lord Ranelagh which was alluded to by the Duke of Wellington, and I am sure I can answer for the same readiness to bear the like testimony on the part of those of my countrymen who were then with the Carlists.

"The noble Earl stated, in the first instance, that his Britannic Majesty's forces had acted in open co-operation with the Legion. I shall not refer to any other operations than those in the river Nervion, and previous to the attack in the dark on the bridge of Luchana and Monte de Cabras on the 24th of December. If then, by this *open co-operation* is meant the conveying backwards and forwards by the boats of his Britannic Majesty's squadron of the Christino troops from one side of the river to the other in the neighbourhood of Portugalete, and out of the range of the Carlist batteries, such co-operation, unaccompanied by any act of offensive hostility, was undoubtedly afforded.

“ The next point is the employment of the Royal Marines in working the guns of Fort Desierto, whilst the vessels to which they belonged, as well as their boats were constantly exposed to the retaliatory fire of the Carlists. That the marines and seamen were so employed we subsequently learned to be true, but during the time there was no means of ascertaining whilst the Spanish flag was flying above Fort Desierto, that British naval forces, and not troops of the Queen Dowager of Spain, were thus acting as belligerents behind stone walls, whilst their vessels, apparently without a soul on board, lay quietly at anchor, secured save by accidental misdirection, from the Carlist shot, by the protection of their neutral flag, as it was then considered, so far at least as offensive operations were concerned.

“ As for the boats of the squadron which were alleged to have been fired upon by the Carlists whilst employed with the British colours displayed, in keeping up the communications, I can only say such acts of aggression on the part of the Carlists must have taken place during the night, or under some other circumstances, which prevented the flag from being distinguished; indeed, so scrupulous were the Carlists to avoid direct hostilities with the British squadron, that the Infante Don Sebastian

had, it was universally known amongst the Royalist army, requested of the General-in-chief that even if an aggressive shot should be fired from the men-of-war it should not be returned.

“I trust I have now said sufficient to show that, if it can be proved by the evidence of every Englishman who took part with the besieging army the facts are as I have stated, the concluding remarks of Lord Minto relative to the character of open belligerents assumed by his Britannic Majesty’s forces are wholly unsupported by what actually took place; for I must be permitted to maintain, with all deference to the Noble Earl, that his Britannic Majesty’s forces were in all appearance strictly neutral, and that they were on no occasion previous to the attack on Luchana, considered as belligerents in an offensive sense.

“I shall make no comment as to whether such manner of carrying on warlike operations be either chivalrous or generous, but shall merely repeat that I neglected no opportunity of obtaining for my own satisfaction, the earliest and most accurate intelligence of the British movements, and that what I have been able to collect fully justifies me in corroborating every statement made in the letter quoted by the Duke of Wellington, and which gave his Grace occasion to infer that the conduct pursued by

his Britannic Majesty's naval forces was neither fair nor honourable as between nation and nation. I have the honour to be, Sir, your very obedient servant,

"S. M. HUMPHREYS."

"Brussels, April 28th, 1837."

(B.)

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THE following document is interesting as illustrative of the spirit of conciliation and mercy which actuated Don Carlos and his ministry at the period when the siege of Bilbao was commenced under Villarreal, in October, 1836.

“ROYAL ARMY.

“By an order which I have this day received from his Excellency the General-in-Chief of the Armies of the King, under date of the 25th of the present month, I am instructed to communicate to all those who have been expelled from the kingdom, or sent to other provinces, that they are hereby permitted to return to the bosom of their families, without fear or alarm.

“As you are comprised in this order, I hasten



to make it known to you that you may take such steps as you may think necessary.

“God protect you.

“JOSE MARIA DE AGUIRRE, *Com.*”

“Arciniega, Oct. 25, 1836.

“To Don Jose Antonio de Oladia, and Don  
Juan Antonio de Yturribarria, Bayonne.”

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#### OCTOBER SIEGE OF BILBAO, 1836.

The French journals published the following bulletin extraordinary, addressed to the Minister of War, at Madrid, by the Christino Commandante at Bilbao. The translation varies in several places from that which fell into my hands, (alluded to at Vol. I. page 220) and I cannot say which is the correct one ; not having seen the Spanish original.

“EXCELLENT SIR,—After a siege which lasted six days, and which, during the last three, was more destructive than any ever yet recorded in the annals of history, the enemy abandoned their senseless attempt with as much opprobrium and disgrace to themselves as glory to this heroic town, and its brave defenders. Two of our principal batteries had been dismantled, after six hours’ continual

firing, and all the artillery-men who had served the guns had been put *hors de combat*, and were more or less severely wounded. Nevertheless the breach opened by the enemy's fire was defended throughout the day, by a small number of infantry, who, in spite of the losses sustained by their ranks from the Carlist batteries, never once thought of seeking shelter, and manfully disputed every inch of ground.

“The enemy thinking it easy to storm the place, by means of the access presented by the walls in ruin, made a reconnoissance under the walls at eleven o'clock in the evening, arriving as far as the parapet; but the garrison charged the assailants with unexampled intrepidity, and forced them to give way, and the enemy falling back left under the ramparts a number of men killed and wounded. Their losses in this attack amounted to two hundred men. This attempt, followed by several partial attacks, which were continued throughout the night, prevented the batteries from being re-established with the requisite solidity, and on the following day it was not only impossible to discharge these batteries, but others were also hit by the enemy's shot; two more were dismantled, and thus was opened an entire line of attack without guns, and defended only by the infantry,

which pressed upon the ruined walls. During the night the enemy made preparations for a new attack; and on our side we prepared to defend the place, but the attack was not made. The efforts of the leaders themselves were unable to triumph over the panic of the soldiers. Profiting during the night by this momentary tranquillity, and by the cessation of hostilities, which was no doubt occasioned by the rain that fell in torrents, we worked with redoubled activity at the reparation of the works, into which a breach had been made, and at the erection of new ones. On the following day all the batteries, established with the same solidity as before the siege, opened upon those of the enemy so well-directed a fire, that at four o'clock in the evening the whole of the Carlist artillery was silenced. The severe experience gained by the enemy, during these three days, convinced them of the impossibility of taking the place without annihilating the whole of its brave defenders. They accordingly decided upon withdrawing the whole of their artillery. Of this fact we were assured last night. The whole line of the batteries has been abandoned, and merely a few battalions of infantry occupy the same position as before.

“ All the divisions of the Army and the Na-

tional Guards have done their duty admirably, and have vied with each other in zeal and courage; the brilliant and multiplied proofs of which I shall lay before your Excellency as soon as I am sufficiently at liberty to address a minute report of them to you. I now merely inform your Excellency, that I am proud of commanding such valiant troops, to whose heroic intrepidity in the midst of peril no language can do justice. Their conduct has been, in every respect, worthy of a signal testimony of the royal munificence. I should be wanting in my duty if, in spite of the short time at my disposal, I neglected to state to your Excellency the misfortunes of this town, which is so worthy of peculiar attention, both from its patriotism and its sufferings. For the second time, its inhabitants have given to the world an admirable proof of their patriotic enthusiasm, regardless of their lives, and solicitous only of preserving their honour.

“The damage occasioned by the former siege was considerable, but the losses sustained from the present have been far greater. The project of the Carlists was to gratify the thirst of private vengeance on Bilbao—a plan worthy of the men by whom it was entertained—worthy of the Bishop of Leon, Eguia, and the Marquis de Valde

Espina. The framers of the plan witnessed the sufferings to which the town was exposed, and yet collected around it all the elements of destruction. From the commencement to the termination of the siege, the enemy directed 2,000 incendiary projectiles against the town, which, for three days, was exposed to this shower of fire, and thus completely ruined and disfigured. Not a single house has escaped without injury of some sort. Furniture, goods, the wealth accumulated by industry and trade, all have been destroyed or buried in a heap of ruins. The loss is estimated at several millions, and yet in the midst of the scene of devastation and mourning, not a murmur of complaint was heard. Men and women—in a word, the whole population—were occupied only with repulsing the enemy, and whilst their ruin was being completed their only care was to furnish the defenders of the place with supplies and assistance. An observer might have availed himself of this opportunity of witnessing a repetition of the sublime traits which immortalised the heroic ages of Rome and Sparta.

“As I have already announced to your Excellency, I will shortly lay before you more ample details of the operations of the siege, as it would be unjust to deprive a number of honourable citizens of the praises and the recompenses which are their due.

From this moment I may assure your Excellency, that with Spaniards like those in the town of Bilbao, the cause of the Usurper will never triumph, nor will the throne of her Majesty Isabella II. and the liberties of the country be ever endangered.

God preserve you.

“ARRAOZ.”

(A true copy.)

“Bilbao, October 29.”

(C.)

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FROM GENERAL COUNT DE CASA EGUIA TO THE  
MINISTER OF WAR.

EXCELLENT SIR,—It is with grief that I communicate to you the enclosed report of the perfidious conduct of the besieged against an officer sent as a parliamentary. It was unworthy of the Spanish character, and a poor recompense for the generosity shown by the troops of his Majesty in sparing the lives of a garrison of 300 men, taken by assault in fort San Mamès. Be pleased to lay this before his Majesty.

God protect your Excellency.

Count de CASA EGUIA.

Camp before Bilbao, Nov. 11.

To the Minister of War.

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## FROM BRIGADIER ZARATEIGUI TO GENERAL EGUIA.

EXCELLENT SIR,—My Adjutant, Don Mariano Sanz, presented himself in the usual forms of a *parlamentario* before the gate of San Agustin, of Bilbao, in order to deliver two despatches forwarded to me by your Excellency: one from the Universal Minister, and the other from your Excellency, both addressed to the Consul of his Britannic Majesty residing in that town. He had ordered the trumpet to be sounded for the fourth time, when the besieged fired at him several shots, one of which seriously wounded him. He, however, succeeded in getting away, and was led to my quarters, where he remains.

The despatches and his *boyna* (cap) remained behind.

God protect your Excellency.

JUAN ANTONIO ZARATEIGUI.

Deusto, Nov. 11th.

To General Count de Casa Eguia.

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GENERAL SARASA'S REPORT OF A SORTIE FROM  
BILBAO.

EXCELLENT SIR,—This morning, at half-past twelve o'clock, I quitted Zamudio for the heights



of San Domingo, to reconnoitre the line. At one o'clock I learnt that the enemy, 2,000 in number, had made a sortie from Bilbao, with the intention of getting possession of the above mentioned heights and burning a number of houses. I hastened my march, and gave orders that six companies of the 4th battalion, stationed at Derio and Zamudio, should, with all possible expedition, advance and reinforce those of the 6th battalion who were protecting the heights.

I arrived on the ground at half-past one. The advanced posts had already opened fire and were retreating on San Domingo, pursued by the enemy. At this moment, the flank companies of the 6th battalion, with their Commandante at their head, charged the enemy with such vigour, that although considerably superior in numbers they were obliged to retreat on Begoña, as far as the point called 'the Rotura.' Here again the enemy had to sustain a heavy fire from one of our batteries, supported by some companies of the 6th battalion, intrenched behind a wall on the high road. The companies belonging to the 4th battalion now making their appearance, the enemy were again attacked, compelled to abandon all their positions—and to retreat disgracefully at four o'clock, p.m., pursued by our brave troops, notwithstanding the heavy firing of their forts; they however suc-

ceeded in setting fire to some houses at Uribarri and others near to our batteries.

The loss of the enemy must be considerable; several of their dead were left on the field of battle, and they carried away a great many wounded. Our loss is insignificant. The valour of our soldiers is above all praise.

God protect your Excellency.

JUAN MANUEL SARASA.

Head-quarters, Galdacano, Nov. 23, 1836.

To the Minister of War.

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GENERAL BRUNO DE VILLARREAL'S REPORT OF  
THE REPULSE OF ESPARTERO AT CASTREJANA.

EXCELLENT SIR,—The arms of his Majesty have obtained another day of glory. At break of day Espartero assembled the whole of his forces at Sestao, and advancing by the Desierto, crossed a bridge which he had thrown in front of San Nicolas, and took the direction of Burceña by Baracaldo. I had taken up my position from the bank of the river near Burceña to the bridge of Castrejana, covering the fords Ibarza, Achandia, Zuvilleta, Ibargoche, and Puertorico; and from Alonsotegui

to Sodupe and Oguendo. I left Brigadier Don Prudencio Sopelana to defend the bridge of Castrejana with the flank company of the 2nd battalion of Guipuscoa, and the 1st, 4th, and 5th of Alava. I also placed at the bridge of Alonsotegui the commander of the 1st battalion of Alava, with three companies of his battalion; the bridge of Lacuarde was intrusted to the commander of the 4th battalion, with three companies belonging to his own battalion and the 5th. The bridge of Burceña was defended by the commander of the 8th battalion of Biscay, with his battalion.

These dispositions taken, I hastened to the advanced guard commanded by Don Castor Andechaga, and composed of the 7th battalion of Biscay. The instant I arrived (mid-day) the firing commenced from the heights, near the convent of Burceña. After a short time I made a feigned retreat, in hopes of drawing my opponents towards the bridge of Castrejana. The enemy's line at that time extended along the whole of my front, and the fire was general.

The enemy now attempted to force the passage by the bridge of Castrejana and the fort of Zuñilleta; but our men, placed on the bridge, charged them at the point of the bayonet, and drove them from the houses, the heights, and the Hermitage of Santa Agueda, and even got possession of the

last mentioned height, notwithstanding a strong resistance.

At dusk, the enemy were flying in disorder. We are still pursuing them. We have already made several prisoners, and got possession of ammunition, gun carriages, and mules laden with baggage.

Our loss is trifling; that of the enemy must be considerable, for the field of battle was covered with their dead.

I remain on the lines in order to give them a warm reception should they again attempt to advance.

BRUNO DE VILLARREAL.

Heights of Castrejana, Nov. 27.

To the Minister of War.

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GENERAL COUNT DE CASA EGUIA'S REPORT OF  
THE ATTACK ON SAN AGUSTIN.

EXCELLENT SIR,—Agreeably to my report of last night, the firing against the convent of San Agustin commenced this morning at half-past nine.

The bridge of Burceña has been broken down, it being my opinion that the division of Espartero will endeavour to force that passage; I have rein-

forced the party defending the bridge with two battalions and two pieces of eight.

God protect your Excellency.

Count de CASA EGUIA.

Head-quarters, Olaveaga, Nov. 27, 1836.

To the Minister of War.

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FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

EXCELLENT SIR,—The firing against the convent of San Agustin continued this afternoon, but having heard the fire of Espartero's column, which was attacking our positions, I gave orders to the Commandant-General of the Engineers and the Commandant of the line instantly to take San Agustin by assault, whilst with the whole of my disposable force I advanced on Burceña.

I have not time to send your Excellency any details. I am, however, happy to inform you that our efforts have been crowned with success; the enemy has been repulsed and beaten, and the convent of San Agustin taken by assault.

We were only able to save 75 prisoners; *the loss of the enemy is serious*. I have sent the prisoners to the Commandant-General of Biscay, that they may be forwarded to the depôt; I have also

sent 24 prisoners wounded to the hospital of Munguia.

God protect your Excellency.

Count de CASA EGUIA.

Head-quarters, Olaveaga, Nov. 27, 1836.

To the Minister of War.

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FROM THE MARQUIS DE VALDE-ESPINA ON THE  
VICTORIES OF THE 27TH NOV.

EXCELLENT SIR,—The enemy has been beaten and repulsed by our brave troops on the bridge of Castrejana, and a ford of Zuvilleta.

San Agustin has been taken by assault. Our volunteers gave proofs of courage beyond all description; they actually advanced in the midst of burning materials, and the destructive fire of bombs and granades. A great many of the enemy were sacrificed to the vengeance of our soldiers—75 only were saved. Many Christinos were burnt to death in the convent, which was set fire to by their comrades.

We have also got possession of a fortified ancient palace, and a house adjoining it.

God protect your Excellency.

Marquis de VALDE-ESPINA.

Deusto, Nov. 27, 1836.

To the Minister of War.

GENERAL VILLARREAL'S REPORT OF THE SECOND  
VICTORY AT CASTREJANA.

EXCELLENT SIR,—Desirous of giving fresh vigour to our operations, I ordered Brigadier Castor Andechaga to put himself at the head of the seventh battalion of Biscay, and to turn, very early this morning, the position of the heights of Santa Agueda, situated on our left. This movement was well executed, and at nine o'clock the fire was opened. The enemy, in great force, occupied the chain of mountains which descend to the convent of Burceña, and apparently had the intention of forming *en masse* near that point; but the sudden appearance of our guerillas on their flank, and four companies, commanded by Brigadier Prudencio Sopelana on the rear guard, threw the Christinos into such confusion that they fled in the greatest disorder.

Wishing to take advantage of this state of things, I ordered the river to be crossed at the ford Zuvilleta, by General Simon de la Torre, with the tenth battalion, and Don Juan Antonio Zaratieigui; whereupon they speedily got possession of the opposite bank. The positions nearest to

Burceña were thus in our power. Here, notwithstanding the fire of the enemy, our troops formed in column, and the flank companies were able to join the guerillas of Castor Andechaga. The rear guard of the enemy was now surrounded by our brave fellows, and compelled to fly towards the advanced guard. It was impossible to pursue them any further, for there they were protected by two squadrons of cavalry, Fort del Desierto, a steam boat, and three *Trincaduras*.

Espartero has left behind him a stain on his character greater than his disgraceful defeat. The village of Baracaldo, and all the houses in the vicinity were set on fire; amidst the smoke arising, we saw the cowards retreating towards Portugalete and Zamorosta, pursued by the cries and groans of the unfortunate beings thus driven to despair—innocent victims of the most atrocious barbarity!

This afternoon I reconnoitred the field of battle occupied by the enemy, and the quantity of dead bodies which covered it, proved that his loss during yesterday and to-day must have been very considerable—all which I shall send your Excellency a detailed account of as soon as I shall have collected the particulars. In the mean time, however, I must make known to your Excellency that all the chiefs, officers and soldiers have fulfilled their duty, and that I have been personally supported



in the points of greatest danger, yesterday and to-day, by Generals la Torre, Don Alonso Cuevilas, and the Count da Madeira; the Lieutenant-Colonel Count de Mortara, and the Brigadiers Don Juan Antonio Guergué, Don Ignacio Lardizabal, and Don Basilio Antonio Garcia,—not omitting the General Staff of the army, and its excellent Chief Don Antonio Urbiztondo.

God protect your Excellency.

BRUNO DE VILLARREAL.

Heights of Castrejana, Nov. 28th.

To the Minister of War.

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GENERAL COUNT CASA EGUIA'S REPORT OF THE  
ATTACK ON THE CONVENT OF THE CONCEPTION.

EXCELLENT SIR,—By my report of this morning your Excellency will have learned that the enemy continued retreating, pursued by our troops. The firing has now ceased, and I have thought the moment opportune to summon the town to surrender on the terms hereafter mentioned. As yet I have received no answer; they promise to send a reply to-morrow. In the mean time I have caused a fresh battery to be constructed to destroy Fort Conception. I shall then be enabled to take in flank

the whole of the defences of the enemy.—God protect your Excellency.

Count de CASA EGUIA.

Head-Quarters, Olaveaga, Nov. 28.

To the Minister of War.

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The following is a copy of the *cartel* delivered to the garrison of Bilbao:—

TO THE SUPERIOR CHIEF OF THE ENEMY'S  
TROOPS IN BILBAO.

An honourable capitulation made in time, may save the town and garrison from a frightful catastrophe. Incendiarism, pillage, and all the horrors to which a town taken by assault is liable, are the evils which I foresee, and which I am desirous of avoiding. At a later period it will not be in my power. If you, who up to the present moment have loyally fulfilled your duties, should exceed all the limits of prudence by a prolonged resistance, you will compel me to take the place by storm, as I did the convent of San Agustin.

Count de CASA EGUIA.

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GENERAL SARASA'S REPORT OF THE SORTIE  
TOWARDS THE PUENTE NUEVO.

EXCELLENT SIR,—At two o'clock this morning, two companies of the enemy made a sortie from fort el Morro; one took the direction of Bazarrate, near Begoña, where one of our advanced pickets was stationed, and the other, reinforced by the detachment which occupies the fortified house del Verdel, advanced towards the bridge of Bolueta, the object of both being to get possession of these two points, and thus cut off our communication by the high road. The company which attempted the attack on Bazarrate was soon compelled to retreat, notwithstanding the numerical inferiority of our troops; the other party persisting in the attempt to take the post of Bolueta, it was reinforced by a company from another post, and they ultimately compelled the enemy to retreat, although the latter were protected by a tremendous fire from their forts, and by musketry, grenades, &c.

The fire lasted until nearly two o'clock, P. M. Our only loss is one man wounded; that of the enemy must be severe, for we saw them carry away many of the wounded.

God protect your Excellency.

JUAN MANUEL SARASA.

Head-quarters San Domingo, Dec. 2.

To the Minister of War.

GENERAL VILLARREAL'S REPORT OF THE VICTORY  
OF ASUA.

EXCELLENT SIR,—The enemy not appearing to notice our numerous provocations and offers of battle, I concluded that this indifference arose from their being well secured in strong positions, and I resolved to make a reconnoissance, in order to see whether it was not possible to dislodge them. My intentions were approved of by his Excellency Count de Casa Eguia.

At break of day six companies of the 8th battalion, and four of the 6th of Biscay, stationed at Umbe, made a flank movement towards the village Luchoa, to the left of the enemy. I, with my staff, and the 3rd and 10th battalions of Navarre, commanded by General José Antonio Goñi, advanced on the centre, followed by the companies of Arragonese, the first provincial battalion, the 2d Guipuscoans, and the Algerines. The other corps remained on the lines ready to co-operate in case of need.

At eight o'clock, A. M., the first companies opened the fire; that of the guerillas then became general, protected by our artillery. So bravely did these troops conduct themselves, that the enemy was soon forced to abandon Luchoa. At the same

time, General Goñi advanced by the bridge of Asua, and, notwithstanding a strong resistance, at mid-day I was master of Luchoa, Erandio, Asua, Sondica, and Lexona. By our manœuvres, we also obliged the enemy to change the front of his line, and to retreat on the heights of Ondis.

I now drew up my men on the plain, and, to recommence the action, I sent out guerillas from the different corps. The enemy had previously got possession of a house situated on the slope of the mountain, where he had placed a detachment. From this house, guerillas were sent out; and from its proximity to our lines, we were greatly inconvenienced. In order to drive the enemy from this place, I ordered Captain Don Manuel Crespi to charge with fifteen lancers, belonging to the escort of his Excellency General Eguia, then at my side. This charge, executed with great intrepidity, threw the guerillas into disorder. The enemy, however, desirous of making a last effort, caused their cavalry to advance, thinking it would do wonders against our forces on the plain. The charge was made in full gallop on our infantry, but was received with the greatest coolness, and discharges of musketry. The enemy's cavalry, at length was obliged to retreat in disorder, leaving many horses and men on the field of battle. No second charge was made.

The firing continued until dusk. I then ordered my soldiers to be cantoned in the villages I had got possession of, leaving the enemy on the mountains.

The garrison of Bilbao seeing our troops engaged, made a sortie with considerable force to the side of Begoña; but his Excellency General Sarasa having taken the necessary measures, they were soon repulsed with loss by Brigadier Don Prudencio Sopelana, at the head of some companies of the Guides of Alava, the 3d Provisional battalion of Castile, and the first battalion of Alava.

Our loss is insignificant—that of the enemy considerable; for they left many of their dead and horses on the field of action. We made forty prisoners.

The enemy, unfortunately, burnt and pillaged several houses during the battle.

God protect your Excellency.

BRUNO DE VILLARREAL.

Head-quarters, Erandio, Dec. 5.

To the Minister of War.

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GENERAL SARASA'S REPORT OF THE SORTIE  
FROM BILBAO, THE 5TH DEC.

EXCELLENT SIR,—The garrison of Bilbao, hearing the firing of the engagement, were desirous of ascertaining whether our line was well secured. For this purpose, at 11 o'clock A. M., 600 men made a sortie, advancing on the Rotura, a point situated near the church of Begoña, and where one of our advanced posts was stationed. At the approach of the enemy this post was obliged to retreat on the reserve. The enemy then sent out their guerillas in the direction of the high road, to the side of Ornetá. The fire was commenced by the 3rd Provincial battalion then at the advanced posts; this battalion was soon reinforced by several other companies. The enemy's guerillas advanced on the companies which I had stationed in the houses of Ornetá and Cherdinaga, and which received orders to remain firm; but a half company stationed in the houses called Panaderías, in Begoña, and at Bazarrate, were obliged to give way to superior numbers, and retire.

Things were in this state, and the combat sustained with vigour, when the 1st battalion of Alava entered the field of action. I caused it to form in column at the Hermitage. I now perceived that the enemy were about to set fire to the Panaderías, and

two houses close to it. I caused the two companies of the guides of Alava, which I had in reserve, to advance, and to charge by the right flank. This movement was executed with promptness. The enemy at the moment received from the town a reinforcement of 1400 men, divided into two columns. The strongest placed itself in the Circo, and the other near to the church of Begoña, from whence it could assist the 600 men. That in the Circo acted as a reserve. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the enemy, they could not gain an inch of ground from our brave fellows, their only success being the burning of six houses near to the city, including the Panaderias.

At six o'clock p. m., the enemy were retreating in disorder, pursued as far as the Rotura, although protected by a heavy fire from the church of Begoña, and the artillery of the forts.

The loss of the enemy must be serious, they having carried away with them a great many dead and wounded; ours is trifling. I will send your Excellency full details, as well as the names of those who most distinguished themselves.

God protect your Excellency.

JUAN MANUEL SARASA.

Head-quarters, San Domingo, over Bilbao,

Dec. 5, 1836, seven o'clock.

To the Minister of War.



GENERAL VILLARREAL'S REPORT OF THE BATTLE  
OF LUCHANA, 25TH DECEMBER, 1836.

EXCELLENT SIR,—Yesterday (the 24th) was the day fixed upon for the attack against the enemy's position. Before day-break our troops began to march; but very soon a tremendous storm accompanied by a heavy fall of snow forced them to halt. Nevertheless, the enemy's guerillas, who considerably harassed our right flank, had been previously repulsed. The enemy now pointed his artillery upon the bridge of Luchana; our batteries replied; but towards four o'clock the fog had become so thick that the firing on both sides ceased. The enemy, however, profited by that suspension of arms and caused all their vessels to ascend the river, as far as the arch of the bridge of Luchana. The crews of the trincaduras seized the first battery, but not until after a frightful carnage of their comrades had been made, over whose dead bodies heaped up, they effected their entrance; but at the same moment I reinforced the position by three battalions of Alava. Words are wanting to represent all the subsequent horrors of that lamentable night. The firing of the musketry and bombs carried destruction in every direction. At three dif-

ferent intervals the enemy reached the heights of Cabras and Arreagas, but were repulsed by our brave soldiers at the point of the bayonet, leaving with us several prisoners and muskets.

The light from the snow on this sanguinary night, showed the combat in all its horrors,—the earth covered with mutilated bodies and blood ! Some idea may be formed of the carnage, when I inform your Excellency that it lasted fourteen hours, and that the ground was disputed inch by inch.

The continuance of the tempest compelled us to cease firing, and we retreated in good order ; several pieces of artillery and our positions remain in the possession of the enemy.

God protect your Excellency.

BRUNO DE VILLARREAL.

Head-quarters, Galdacana, Dec. 25, 1836.

To the Universal Minister.

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FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

EXCELLENT SIR,—I will arrange with as little delay as possible, all the details of the affair of the 24th, and of the succeeding night, and forward them to your Excellency. The loss sustained by the army under my command shall be estimated

with the utmost exactness. Your Excellency will see that it has not been very considerable; that of the enemy was enormous. They mounted to our positions over the dead bodies of their companions, and three times overthrown at the point of the bayonet by our gallant soldiers, they were precipitated from the top of the hill. Four times our troops were charged by the enemy, and four times did we repulse them; and if our adversaries succeeded by means of numbers trebling our own, in forcing our positions, that success cost them dear.

God preserve you.

BRUNO DE VILLARREAL.

Head-quarters, Galdacano, December 26, 1836.

To the Universal Minister.

In June 1837, the Carlist forces were estimated as follows :—

In the Basque Provinces and Navarre, under Guibelalde and Uranga—not including armed peasants .....	35,000
Under Don Carlos, gone to Catalonia .....	12,000
In Catalonia, well armed, under various leaders, and organized, 23 Battalions—say .....	20,000
In Valencia, under Cabrera, Serrador, and others ....	16,000
In Lower Arragon, chiefly with the expedition.....	10,000
In various parts of the kingdom, in small bands .....	6,000
	<u>99,000</u>

(D.)

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The following amusing illustration of liberal legislation in mercantile matters, is extracted from the correspondence of the *Morning Chronicle*, dated Bilbao, Jan. 15.

“The Junta of the Armament and Defence of Biscay, which has rendered such distinguished, such invaluable service during the late sanguinary struggle, has just issued a proclamation, informing the public that the General-in-chief has in virtue of the full powers with which he is invested, acceded to the request of the Junta to repeal the edict issued by General Cordova, in December 1835, prohibiting any articles of merchandise to be sent out of Bilbao. This blockade system has been most prejudicial to the commercial interests of the city, without having in the slightest degree crippled the Carlists, who, as is notorious, receive every species of supply by the French frontier. \* \* \*

“By the raising of the commercial blockade, which is accorded by decree of the General-in-chief, dated the 4th instant, all articles of legal mercantile traffic are permitted to be exported from Bilbao by land and water, *with the exception of the following* :—

“Every species of arms, munitions, military clothing, insignia, equipments and warlike stores—pitch, shoes, either men’s or women’s; hemp, copper, in whatever form; hides, tin and tin plates, tow, brass, lead, and resin. For the moment also and until the place shall become better supplied, the Junta prohibits the exportation of flour of every description, grain of all kinds, rice, beans, peas, salt, country wine, brandy and oil.”

Such is the free-trade accorded by the government of Isabella II. !!!

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The following document also appeared at the same time in the columns of *The Morning Chronicle*.

PROCLAMATION OF THE CHRISTINO JUNTA OF  
BISCAY.

The Provincial Deputation and Junta of Armament and Defence of Biscay would be wanting in those duties which gratitude and justice render incumbent on them, if they omitted to give a public

and solemn testimony of their sentiments towards those who have contributed by their efforts to save Bilbao from a frightful catastrophe. The gallant garrison of this town, and its meritorious national militia of all classes, have given in presence of these authorities such repeated and solemn proofs of long-suffering, valour, and heroism; the civil and military authorities have displayed so much good-will, activity, and intrepidity, that it is impossible either to appreciate sufficiently the high value of their virtues, or to refuse them the tribute of admiration and eulogium to which they have entitled themselves. But what fruit would the sacrifices, the sufferings, the indomitable courage, the blood so copiously shed have produced, if the armies of the north, and of the reserve, guided by their gallant and intrepid chief, his Excellency Don Baldomero Espartero; if the Spanish and English vessels; if the generous seamen of those nations had not rushed into difficulties and dangers to liberate this town? Neither deep rivers, nor almost inaccessible mountains crowned with formidable batteries, supported by the most celebrated champions of usurpation and despotism, nor the darkness of the night, and an unheard-of tempest of snow and hail, could restrain the impetuous ardour of the soldiers of liberty, who, conquering

almost insuperable obstacles, their brows crowned with well-merited laurel, came to embrace their companions and to admire the prodigies of an equal importance which had been performed by the defenders of all classes of this heroic town, whose walls and edifices proclaim with sublime eloquence the high deeds of which they had been witnesses.

It is doubtless gratifying to bestow just praises on all, and the Deputation and Junta fulfil this most pleasing obligation with a pure and inexpressible delight. Receive then, the homage of their sincere gratitude, of their admiration,—all who have either directly or indirectly, concurred in saving this immortal town; and who have rendered so signal and immense a service to the cause of their country.

(Signatures)

Santos San Miguel, President; Miguel de la Fuente; Vicente de Ansotegui; José Pedro de Echevarria; Antonio de Irigoyen; Romualda de Arellano; Manuel Maria de Guendica; José Maria de Uria Nafarrondo; Santiago Maria de Ingunza; José Blas de Araña; Tomas J. de Epalza; Tiburcio Maria de Recacoechea; José de Busturia; Antonio de Araña; José Pantaleon de Aguirre; José

Antonio de Ibarre; Antonio Cirilo de Vildósola; Francisco de Gaminde; Gabriel Maria de Orbegozo; Melquiades de Echávarri; J. S. de Lequerica; Por Acuerdo de S. E. la Diputacion Provincial y Junta de Armamento y Defensa de Vizcaya; Manuel de Barandino, Secretario Interino.

Bilbao, Jan. 1, 1837.

THE END.



